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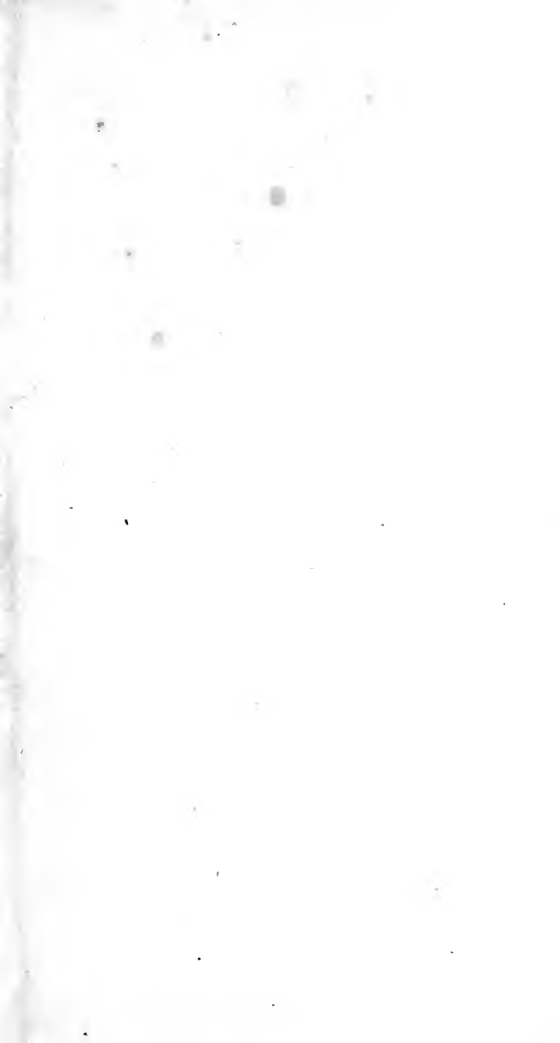
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LOS ANGELES

Mary Ann Gale

Harriet Mary Lees







THE
YOUNG COUNTESS;

A
Tale for Youth.

BY THE AUTHORESS OF THE "BLIND CHILD."

"A man without any religion at all, may do good occasionally, may act laudably by chance:—his virtues may break out occasionally in temporary gleams; but whoever wishes to be habitually and uniformly good, must have the vital principle of Piety working at his heart; and by a constant regular warmth, producing constant and regular fruits of righteousness."

BISHOP PORTEUS'S SERMONS.

IN ONE VOLUME.

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PREFACE.

WHOEVER in perusing the following pages, expects to find more than the title page announces, will certainly be disappointed. It is literally a simple Tale for the use of Young Persons, that I now offer to the Public. Here are no striking adventures, no regularly constructed story, no powerful delineation of character. All that I have endeavoured to attain, is the exemplification of one truth: namely, that from Religion alone, pure morality, the government of the heart and the temper—and even the perfection of manners, can be derived.

Few, can be, like the Heroine of my little story, exposed to the temptations of unlimited wealth ; but many in a much humbler walk of life, carry in their hearts the same dispositions.

The same selfishness, the same angry passions, the same inclination to ridicule those they think less amiable than themselves, may be found in a very inferior station to that of my young Countess ; and to eradicate these, as well as every other evil disposition, we must ultimately refer to the great laws of Christianity, which alone, will be found capable of effectually purifying the heart.

THE
YOUNG COUNTESS.

PART THE FIRST.

Chapter I.

Ambition, Tyranny, and Disappointment.

IN one of the most wild and retired parts of Scotland stands the ancient Castle of the Earls of Clanallan, commanding from its turrets, and from the immense rock on which it is built, the grandest and most picturesque views. At a considerable distance from any town, its wide domain is thinly scattered with cottages, inhabited by a tenantry extremely poor, but devotedly attached to their Lord. In a situation so far remote from the changes of modern society, may still be found considerable traces of that feudal system which bound all the retainers on an estate, to the Laird, or head of that clan, in a degree which

scarcely the most despotic monarch can expect from his subjects; for here, not force alone, or fear, obtained their unlimited obedience, but real affection; and that enthusiasm of devotion which makes disobedience appear almost impossible.

In this retreat, a few years ago, lived Hugh, the tenth Earl of Clanallan; his person majestic and commanding, was the type of a mind which suffered no appeal from its authority;—which would not even endure the slightest murmur from those about him. He had married in middle life, the fair and gentle Lady Lucy Maitland, only daughter and heiress of the Earl of Glenross; whose title as well as estates were considered to be entailed upon this, his only child. This Lady, however, died before her father, leaving one son, and an infant daughter.

The attachment which Lord Clanallan had sincerely felt for his amiable wife, now became centered in the infant Hugh, called by courtesy, Lord Macalpine. On this child every tender affection rested, every ambitious hope devolved. To the developement of talents which seemed of a superior order, to the future aggrandizement of this boy, the Earl devoted all his thoughts and purposes; and the infant Rosabelle was scarcely considered in the calculations, or cherished in the affections of her only parent. Her grandfather, a reserved and unsociable man, losing in his only daughter, the being who alone had ever possessed the power of awakening his feelings, was hardly by the occasional sight of her children, aroused to any sensation of joy or tenderness. On Hugh, indeed, he looked with some pleasure, as the heir of his titles and

estates ; but that Rosabelle should inherit them, never crossed the mind of either her father or grandfather, though knowing that if her brother died, such must be the event. But at the very time when the blooming boy seemed most established in health, most flourishing in beauty, the fatal blow was struck ! A rapid fever carried off the object of Lord Clanallan's almost idolatrous affection ! Far from tracing in this heart-breaking event the hand of a father who sometimes by apparently severe chastisement recalls his erring children to their duty, scarcely did the proud Clanallan refrain from openly murmuring at a decree of providence, which seemed to him too hard to be endured. Alas, this man, whose will was a law, who never would have forgiven the slightest contradiction from those who depended on him, dared to hesitate in his submission to that power, which had so many claims, not only to his obedience, but to his gratitude.

To the outward duties of religion, to the moral observance of its laws, Lord Clanallan had always attended, but its vital principle had never touched his heart ; there, pride, ambition, and a sense of his own importance, highly incompatible with Christian humility, reigned uncontrolled : —to yield up his will, however painful the trial, to that of his creator, to subdue his own haughty and imperious disposition, never entered into his mind ; and thus his proud heart internally rebelled, and he scarcely withheld his lips from murmuring at the stroke which robbed him of his darling boy ; the support of his family ; the object of his future ambitious hopes. Time, however, wore off in some degree, the acuteness of his anguish ; and Rosabelle, hitherto neglected, became in her turn the object

of his fondest assiduities. Yet, oh! how greatly did his fondness mistake, how much did he err, in supposing that he ensured her happiness by indulgence the most unlimited, and by a delegation of power which would have been dangerous in the hands of one whose age and wisdom were far more matured than those of a child just emerging from her first infancy.

Rosabelle was four years old when her brother died; she was unusually tall for that age, elegant in her formation, with features and a complexion of extraordinary beauty; an open forehead, shaded with clustering curls of the brightest auburn; and large, intelligent, dark eyes, gave a character of majesty to her countenance, which was relieved by the softest and most prepossessing smile imaginable; till by degrees, self-will; and the highest opinion of her own importance, taking possession of her infant mind, those lovely smiles appeared but seldom; and that fair and open brow became contracted by the frequent indulgence of ill-humour.

From the time of Lord Macalpine's death, Rosabelle was her father's idol; every servant was charged, in nothing to contradict her, except her wishes should lead her to any thing that might injure her health or her beauty. Every thing she asked for was immediately, at whatever expense or trouble, to be procured; and nothing but physical impossibility was to prevent her from enjoying every thing she could possibly desire:—at first the wearied and anxious attendants had some difficulty in making her comprehend what were the objects which were absolutely out of her reach, and nothing but the quickness of her apprehension, which

quickly showed her the folly of persisting in requests her good sense convinced her were unattainable, prevented her from literally "crying for the moon;" and insisting in having the rainbow placed within her reach. Frequently in a wet cold evening a man on horseback was sent to the next town, at least ten miles distant, to procure some new toy, or some article of dress for her ladyship's doll; nor could any representation of danger to the messenger, from the darkness of the night, or badness of the roads, prevail upon her to withdraw her commands, and permit him to delay his journey till the morning. Thus by degrees, did this little creature become so absolute in her authority, that she had literally no idea of a possibility that it could be disputed; while the flattery of those around her led to the conviction in her own mind that she was really faultless. Naturally her heart was tender and affectionate, her disposition kind and generous; she gave profusely, but her liberality was no virtue, for she gave nothing that she wanted herself;—she made no sacrifice even of her slightest pleasures to gratify another.

Those who give even a mite from their poverty, are obliged to deny themselves something that might otherwise have contributed to their own ease or convenience; hence the heart and disposition are corrected, and those germs of self-love in which our nature but too much abounds, are nipped, and prevented from shooting into rank luxuriance; the contrary is often the case of those who give from their abundance:—they relinquish nothing, and sometimes fancy that they thus cheaply purchase a degree of indemnity for those evil habits in which they indulge themselves.

In riding or walking through the park or neighbouring hamlets, Rosabelle's hand was open to every one who pleaded distress; but she gave without discrimination, and rather threw about her money with the air of a sovereign ordering "largess" to his vassals, than presented it with the manner of one who gives to relieve the distresses of his fellow-creatures; nor would she take the smallest trouble to make her donations more acceptable, or see that it was well applied: from her, no tender word of consolation, no sympathetic tear was ever obtained! Tributes to affliction, often—how much more valuable than all that wealth can bestow!

Thus past the first ten years of her life. The superintendant of her apartments taught her to read when she chose to learn, which in truth was not seldom, because she had naturally a fine capacity, and was desirous of acquiring knowledge; her father himself had given her the first rudiments of French, and drawing, in which he excelled; and had only been prevented from placing her under the care of a governess by her own intreaties; or, rather by the assurance she gave him that "she would not have a governess, that she did not choose it; that Sinclair could teach her to read, and she did not want to learn any thing else."

"But Rosabelle, my darling," said the fond father, "think how ignorant you will appear two or three years hence, when I take you to London; there you will see young ladies who dance elegantly, play on the harp and piano-forte, and have a thousand accomplishments, of which you know nothing; why my dear they would laugh

at you!" "Laugh at me!—at *me*!" exclaimed the little lady; her cheeks crimson, and her eyes darting fire at the bare idea, "Let them, let them if they dare!—and I would never do them the honor of speaking to them again!—then they would be sorry enough for their impertinence!" "Oh, my dear," said the father with an anxious sigh, "you know nothing about it—you do not know what you are talking about!—This is all wrong," he added in a lower tone to himself, "something must be done, some alteration must be made."

"What alteration, papa," cried Rosabelle, "I do not want any alteration, I am very well as I am; I won't go to London, I won't go near those naughty rude girls; I won't have a governess. Oh dear, oh dear, what shall I do—how I am vexed, I am quite ill—I shall die!" Sobs and passionate cries concluded the conference; the Earl terrified at her vehemence, and fearing that she would make herself really ill, clasped her in his arms, promised her not to think any more of a governess at present, if she would be very good and attend to her reading, and her French lessons and drawing; all which she promised and performed, as it suited her convenience and pleasure.

Conversations of a similar nature were renewed from time to time between this too-indulgent father, and a child whose mutinous spirit was only more and more excited by his unlimited tenderness! Time passed on, and at twelve years old, Rosabelle, tall and naturally well formed, had acquired a habit of stooping which rounded her shoulders, contracted her chest, and threatened not only to destroy the grace of her figure, but the strength of her

constitution. A cold, caught in a ramble from which she refused to return, notwithstanding the dews of evening were falling heavily around her, brought on a slight cough, and the anxious Earl excessively alarmed, already anticipated the ravages of consumption. But neither his foreboding fears, nor the fondest entreaties of his unbounded affection could induce the little tyrant to adopt one precaution, or relinquish one gratification which she thought conducive to her own selfish enjoyment. Her ignorance also of all she ought to know, and the total waste of those best years of her life which never could be recalled, struck her father with remorse;—deeply did he regret his mis-calculation, when he saw how little of real happiness his too fond indulgence had procured for his idol. But alas, the habits of years were not easily changed, and he found that he must absolutely make a total alteration in his system before he could hope to ameliorate the character, or improve the mind of his darling.

To restore her health was his first object; and, at last, with many promises that she should have no governess, and that if the masters he procured for her did not please her, they should be changed, he won her consent to leave the cold atmosphere of their northern residence, and travel towards the milder south.

Scarcely had they resolved on this journey, when intelligence reached them of the death of Lord Glenross; an event which excited but slight emotions of sorrow in the mind of Lord Clanallan, who gladly saw in Rosabelle the lovely heiress of all his honors. The same day however, brought letters to the Earl which informed him that another

claimant had arisen of those titles and estates, which both he and Lord Glenross had ever considered as entailed on the children, whether male or female, of the late Lady Clanallan. The next male heir now contended that those titles were limited to male descendants alone, and Lord Clanallan was threatened with an anxious contest, before a matter,—to him so highly important,—could be decided.

The person claiming was scarcely known to Lord Clanallan, and had not been on good terms with the Earl of Glenross; but already he had engaged lawyers on his side, and the contention seemed not likely soon to terminate.

To paint the rage of Lord Clanallan, the stormy passions which shook his haughty soul at this unexpected claim would be impossible. However this matter ended, Rosabelle would still be *his* sole heiress; her wealth would be abundant, her rank indisputable,—what, that the world could give, need be wanting to her enjoyment?—Nothing. Yet might the rebellious and discontented spirit of Lord Clanallan have said like Haman, when honors were lavished on him by a generous master,—“All this availeth me nothing so long as I see Mordecai the Jew, sitting in the king’s gate.” To him, this new claimant was as obnoxious as Mordecai the Jew, had been to the proud minister of King Ahasuerus; and had equal power been given to Clanallan, it can hardly be doubted that the man so offending, would have incurred the fate prepared by Haman, for the object of his hatred.

The journey southward was now absolutely necessary. In the endeavour to secure to Rosabelle what he believed to

be her birth-right, as long as the claim was urged with moderation and a view to justice, he was clearly justified ; but the violence with which he wished to crush if possible, as well as to defeat his adversary, was highly reprehensible ; and exhibited to Rosabelle an example of vehemence, and a revengeful spirit, which did but too much stimulate the evil propensities of her disposition.

It was the spring of the year, the weather warm and pleasant for the season, and the change of air rapidly removed Lady Rosabelle's cough, and restored the bloom in her cheeks. The constant change of objects, and scenes so entirely new, kept her in continual good humour. She had not one fit of crying between Clanallan Castle and Edinburgh, a distance of above a hundred miles ; and her female attendants wished they could spend their lives in travelling, since their young lady was so much improved by it.

Never before had they passed so long an interval undisturbed by her violent reproaches for the most trifling faults, not unfrequently accompanied by personal ill-usage.

Chapter II.

The Toy-Shop, and the Scotch Pebbles.

At Edinburgh they spent a fortnight, during which period Lord Clanallan took the opinions of the most eminent Scottish lawyers on his singular case, and had the satisfaction of finding them decidedly in his favor.

Lady Rosabelle passed most of her mornings in the shops, the elegance of which, at first afforded her the most vivid gratification; but soon her wayward fancy grew tired of this species of amusement, and having half filled the house with trinkets, toys, and every variety of expensive dress, she began to complain that the stupid people showed her nothing new; that she had already bought every thing she thought pretty, and was tired of looking at the same lockets, bracelets, pictures, silks, bonnets, &c. &c. At one or two shops she excited some doubts of her sanity, by imperiously commanding that they should send express to

London for a new collection of trinkets and toys, that they might shew her something a little more worthy of her approbation.

“ But my dearest child ” said her father, who absolutely blushed for her follies, and to say the truth for his own, “ you know we leave Edinburgh the day after to-morrow, therefore it is impossible to have any thing from London in time for you to see it, and as we are going to Bath we shall, I dare say, meet with something there to please you.” “ Then they might have sent before,” answered the impetuous girl, “ they might have guessed I should want new things. Here,” she added, rudely throwing down the things she had been looking at, “ you may take all this trumpery, I will not have any more of it, and if I was going to stay for a month I never would come to this disagreeable shop again.”

“ Oh fie, Rosabelle ! ” said the Earl, “ why do you behave so ? ” She pouted, coloured, and—but that her pride saved her from such a degradation, would have cried ; but her eyes shot angry glances at her father, with whom, mild as his reproof was, she was extremely angry for daring to reprove her at all. After saying a few civil and conciliatory words to Mr. Lismore, the master of the shop, the Earl took his daughter by the hand, and was leading her to the carriage which waited, when her attention was arrested by the appearance of a young lady apparently about seventeen, who, walking up to Mr. Lismore, asked him if he had lately added to his collection of pebbles or minerals, and had any thing to dispose of. “ You know,” she said, with a speaking and intelligent smile, while her com-

plexion was a little heightened, "I do not mean to purchase any thing very expensive, but if you have any thing tolerably reasonable, my collection is yet extremely imperfect and I should like to increase it." "I shall be happy, ma'am, to accommodate you," said Mr. Lismore, with an air of pleased civility, "I have added greatly to my stores since you saw them, and will name the most reasonable prices in my power."

Lady Rosabelle, whom no restraints of good breeding withheld from following any fancy of her mind, gazed eagerly on the young lady whose countenance pleased her, and seeing Mr. Lismore unlocking, and taking out several drawers of what she took to be common stones, occasionally interspersed with pieces of glittering ores and chrystals, whose brightness attracted her; snatched away her hand from her father and running towards the counter, exclaimed, "What are all these things? What are they for? Why did you not shew them to me? I don't care what they cost if they are pretty." "Probably, my dear," said her father, "they were not produced to you, because Mr. Lismore did not suppose they would afford you any gratification." "Then what do you want of them?" asked Rosabelle, turning eagerly to the young lady, "I am sure I do not think they are very pretty. What do you do with them, are they play-things? What use are they?" The young lady fixed her penetrating eyes on the eager little enquirer, and then smiling good humouredly, said, "Indeed, ma'am, I am very unequal to answering your questions to your satisfaction, I am yet but a learner myself; the study of Geology is not a very easy one, but hoping to increase my small stock of knowledge, I am endeavouring to make as complete a collection of the pebbles agates, and other productions of my native country, as my

slender means will enable me to purchase." "I don't understand one word you have been saying!" exclaimed the astonished Rosabelle." "No, that I am sure you do not," replied her father, who, notwithstanding his vexation at her ignorance and rude manners, could hardly help smiling at the singularity of her expressions, "and, therefore, my love, do not interrupt this young lady, who seems to have come here upon a more rational errand than brought us hither." "But I like to see the things, and I choose to see what she buy's and to hear her talk," replied Rosabelle, "for I like her looks."

The young lady smiled and blushed, but extended her hand to Rosabelle, saying, "I am sure, my dear, I ought to thank you for the compliment, and shall be happy if I contribute in any way to your amusement." "Oh, how much I like you!" cried Rosabelle, clinging to the stranger, "I never saw any body I liked half so well!" "Pray, pardon her," said the Earl to the stranger in a low voice, "she is a complete rustic, a spoiled child." "Not spoiled, I hope!" said the young lady, "it would indeed be a pity to spoil what nature has made so perfect!" The Earl bowed to the elegant compliment and sighed as he felt the reproof it was not intended to convey.

For the first time in her life, Lady Rosabelle was quiet in consideration of the feelings and occupations of another, and stood quite still while the owner of the specimens and the young lady talked a language wholly unknown to her, of spars, minerals, agates, cornelians, &c. &c.

With some of the beautiful ribbon and fortification agates; the cornelians, and shining specimens of ores, Rosabelle was herself pleased, and asked some pertinent questions, which

shewed a naturally fine mind, wanting only cultivation to develope its latent good qualities. The young lady selected four or five specimens, and took out her purse to pay for them, when Mr. Lismore unlocking another drawer, said, "Here, Ma'am, are some still finer, do me the favour to look at them, they are the most curious specimens from the rock of Kinnoul. Here is a piece of agate studded with shining chrystals of violet coloured quartz; another of bright red agate, inclosing a brilliant chrystallization of white quartz; the eye-spotted agate of a delicate rose colour; and several others.* They are very rare, and very expensive."

The stranger examined them with great delight, allowed their superiority and scarceness, and replaced them with thanks for the pleasure the sight had afforded her. "But why," exclaimed Rosabelle, "do you not take them if you like them?—why don't you buy them too, if they please you?" "Because," said the young lady, blushing a little, but with perfect good humour, "I cannot afford to give the price for them, I have already spent full as much as I ought in those I have bought, and these are quite beyond my reach." "Never mind that," cried the impetuous Rosabelle, "I will give them to you; I will buy them; Papa will pay for them. Papa, papa, give me some money,—how much do they cost?—let me have them,—I will give them to her!" The young lady blushed deeply, caught the hand which was eagerly extended to grasp the specimens, crying, "impossible, indeed, thank you,—thank you,—but I cannot,—I would not, for the world,—you must not think of it!"—

* These and many others, are specified in Dr. Garnet's tour:—who says, the rock of Kinnoul is more rich in mineralogic treasures, than any other spot he knows.

“Oh Rosabelle!” said the Earl, pleased yet pained, “nothing but your ignorance of the world can plead your excuse for such an offer, made in such a manner! Can you pardon her?” “Oh yes, indeed, indeed,” said the young lady, stooping to caress the mortified Rosabelle, “and feel all the kindness of your intentions my dear, but when you are a little older, you will perceive the impossibility of my profiting by it.” She then with a courtesy to the Earl, was about to leave the shop, but Rosabelle, catching her by the robe, cried “Stay, don’t go, but I suppose” she added half angrily turning to her father, “I must not ask her name, or where she lives!” “Indeed you may do both,” said the young lady, “and I will gladly inform you. My name is Margaret Bruce; I live with my father, who is a Physician, at No. — in ——— Square.” “And may I come and see you, before I leave Edinburgh,” asked Rosabelle, “I am Lady Rosabelle Macalpine, this is my papa, the Earl of Clanallan, and I should like to come and see you above all things.” “And I shall be happy to see you, Lady Rosabelle,” replied Miss Bruce, “and I am sure my father will have great pleasure in shewing your lordship his certainly very fine collection of shells and fossils, and a few cabinet pictures, considered of superior merit.” “We are infinitely indebted to your politeness, my dear madam,” said the Earl, “and the goodness with which you pardon my little rustic. If you will allow us to call on you to-morrow morning, I shall most gladly avail myself of the opportunity.”

The young Lady made a suitable reply, and departed.— The Earl said a few words, in a low voice, to Mr. Lismore, and then taking Rosabelle by the hand, he placed her in the carriage, and they returned to their own abode.

Scarcely had they been at home an hour (in which Rosabelle had not ceased to talk of the charms of her new acquaintance) when Doctor and Miss Bruce were announced, and the young Lady whom they had seen at the jeweller's followed by an elderly gentleman of a prepossessing aspect, entered the room. Both were most politely received by the Earl, and Rosabelle enraptured and unrestrained hung round the neck of Miss Bruce, and thanked her for coming to see her.

After some conversation, it was settled that the Earl and his daughter should pass the next evening at Dr. Bruce's, who invited two or three other gentlemen of superior literary attainments, to meet Lord Clanallan ; who, in their society, and the inspection of a very curious collection of minerals and a few capital pictures, passed three or four hours in a manner so pleasing to himself, that he wondered how he had so long existed, deprived of society so desirable, and with almost all his time devoted to the caprices of a spoiled, however, darling child.

In the mean time, Miss Bruce and a young sister, whom she entirely educated, had, with the kindest indulgence given themselves up to the entertainment of Rosabelle ; with pity the intelligent Margaret and her animated pupil the youthful Jane, saw how sadly the fine understanding of this interesting child, had been allowed to run to waste.

The most powerful minds, like the richest soils, if not duly cultivated produce the most luxuriant weeds, and with pain, they saw how the baneful passions of pride, self-love, and ambition, had grown up and over-shadowed

the young heart of Rosabelle. Still, she had never behaved so well in her life before; charmed with Margaret, and in some degree desirous of emulating the manners of Jane, she controled her wayward spirit, and caught something of the gentleness and polish of their demeanour with a quickness which delighted Lord Clanallan. "She wants nothing but cultivation," thought he, as his eye was anxiously cast towards her, "she will yet be all I wish her."

At that moment he saw the eyes of Dr. Bruce attentively examining her physiognomy and figure. "You do not think her ill, Doctor," he eagerly exclaimed; "you do not think her consumptive?" "Not at present, certainly my Lord," the Doctor replied. "But—you fear—" cried the Earl, "at least you think the disease may be latent in her constitution;—you think her formation—her complexion!—good heavens!—this was what I feared." "Do not alarm yourself unnecessarily, my Lord," said the mild Physician, "on so short an acquaintance it is impossible to judge;—there is, I own, a brilliancy in Lady Rosabelle's eyes and complexion which may indicate—and a stoop in her person that may lead to mischief if not corrected." "Oh that is owing to neglect, entirely; she never stooped till within this twelvemonth—it is only because she will not endeavour to keep upright." "Ah my Lord—will not!" answered Dr. Bruce, "To what fatal consequences both of body and mind may those words lead!" "True, true, oh but too true," said the Earl; "I only am to blame,—pray see her in the morning?—we will delay our journey—we will do any thing you think proper.—Did not the most important business call me to London, I should be too

happy would your admirable daughter pay my poor motherless girl some attention; already I can perceive what advantage she might derive from such an instructress." "We will talk of this to-morrow, my Lord," said the Doctor; "but so far as I can judge at present, a still milder climate than this might be essential to Lady Rosabelle's health."

In the mean time, Rosabelle had followed Miss Bruce and Jane into their own apartment, where they amused her by showing her the collection of minerals Margaret had spoken of, and some books of coloured prints on Natural History. Jane readily gave her visitor sketches of the habits and manners of the animals represented, of very few of which Lady Rosabelle had ever before heard; she was delighted to acquire information at so easy a rate, and to satisfy her naturally inquiring mind without taking the trouble of reading. A piano-forte stood in the room, and at her request Margaret and Jane played and sung to her; which they did with considerable taste, though in a style perfectly simple and unaffected. Except in the streets, since she had been in Edinburgh, Rosabelle had never heard any music; and she stood entranced, absorbed in the delight of listening to the soft melodious voices of the Miss Bruces.

By this time, the other gentlemen having taken their leave, Lord Clanallan, introduced by the Doctor, entered the room; and at his request, the young ladies continued their performance. Rosabelle stealing to her father, put one arm round his neck, and leaning her head on his shoulder, stood gazing with fixed eyes on the fair musicians; when they had done she turned eagerly to him, clasped both arms round

his neck, and cried, "oh papa! how delightful! I must learn music directly?" "With all my heart, my dear girl," replied the pleased father, but you must not fancy you can acquire this delightful accomplishment without taking a great deal of pains, without being very steady and attentive!" "Oh! I will papa, I will indeed, I will study music all day long!" "That would be rather too much Rosabelle, do you think these young ladies have done nothing but study music?"

"Oh no papa, I do not think *that* indeed, for they have shown me beautiful work, painted velvet screens, quantities of books which I believe they know by heart! but I should never be like *them*; never!" she repeated in a despairing tone. "You may far exceed us if you please," said Miss Bruce, kindly taking her hand, "you will enjoy advantages to which we cannot pretend; I am sure Lord Clanallan will give you the very best masters, and nothing more will be required except your own attention, and a just distribution of your time." "I will try, indeed I will try," said the eager girl, "but now sing again, do pray, I like it so much." "It is late Rosabelle," said the Earl, and perhaps Miss Bruce is tired." "No papa, I am sure she is not tired and I don't think it is late, I shall not go away yet, I do not choose it."

Margaret's intelligent eyes seemed to reprove this rudeness and for the first time Lady Rosabelle blushed for her own ill manners, and casting down her eyes endeavoured to correct herself by saying "at least I mean I had rather stay a little longer." "Will you indulge her once more Miss Bruce?" said the Earl, and Margaret immediately complied by singing another song, at the close of which the Earl, requested

his daughter to say good night, a demand with which, however reluctantly, she complied because she thought her new friends would think ill of her if she showed the inclination she felt to rebel against her fathers's commands.

With many caresses and thanks she took leave of the Miss Bruces, first having exacted a promise from them of coming to see her next day before she left Edinburgh. As soon as she was seated in the carriage she began to expatiate with delight on the charms and accomplishments of her new friends, and the Earl, though very gently, endeavoured to lead her to the obvious conclusion that since she admired them so much she ought to endeavour to imitate them. She heard him with unusual patience, entreated him to give her a music master, and promised the most exemplary attention to his instructions.

“ I remember papa,” she said, “ that once you told me I should meet with accomplished girls in England who would laugh at my ignorance. I am sure no English ladies can know more than the Miss Bruces, and they did not once laugh at me, though Jane, who is but a year older than I am, knew the names and histories of all the animals in the picture books, and the Kings and Queens in the History of England, and sings so well, and draws, and understands French; but she seems to take pleasure in telling me things, and did not say a word to vex or make me ashamed.”

“ That, my love, is because she is not only well informed, but that she has a good heart and a kind disposition.” The Earl might have added, had such matters ever entered his calculation which unhappily they never did, that religious

instruction had confirmed the goodness of Jane's heart, and developed the kindness of her disposition, that she was restrained by the fullest sense of Christian charity from ridiculing those who were less informed than herself, and that her humility and the conviction that she ought to do unto others as she would have them to do unto her, made her feel sincere pleasure in gratifying and amusing a little girl whose motherless state, and the evident injury she had received from improper indulgence, excited her compassion. Perhaps had the proud Rosabelle known that such was the sentiment she inspired, she might have felt less kindly towards the Miss Bruces, but blinded by her own high opinion of the potency of wealth and rank, she thought herself far more likely to excite envy than pity in all who beheld her.

Chapter III.

A Letter, Bath, and the Macaw.

THE next morning Doctor Bruce and both his daughters visited the Earl and Lady Rosabelle, and while the girls conversed together on a variety of subjects Doctor Bruce took an opportunity of telling the Earl that he thought a milder climate would be advantageous to Lady Rosabelle, respecting whose health, however, he saw no reason to be alarmed. He gave the Earl many wise directions for its preservation, requesting that her person might be attended to, in such a manner as might correct the stoop she had acquired; nor did he, hesitate to speak pretty plainly on the necessity of adopting some plan which might lead to the occupation of her mind and the correction of her temper.

“Be assured my lord,” he said, “that so fine a mind as Lady Rosabelle possesses cannot be allowed to run to waste with impunity. If not well employed its powers must fall

inward, and prey upon itself; nothing impairs the constitution more than the corrosions of idleness, and the insatiate wishes which arise from over indulgence. Occupy her mind and you will see those eyes naturally so beautiful filled with intelligence; that brow, which already wayward passions have begun to contract, will expand into the delightful expression of candor and sweetness; those cheeks will be rounded by health, peace, and innocence; and overspread by their most brilliant colouring; the mouth, too frequently expressive of disdain and mutiny, will smile in all its native ingenuousness. To these desirable results, the gifts of moderate correction, must not a parent add others, more, infinitely more important?"

"More important," cried the eager Earl, "what *can* to me be more important than the health and improvement of my darling girl?" "Do not think I am departing from the duties of my own profession, and invading those of another," said the good Doctor, his colour a little heightened and a mild smile illumining his fine countenance, "if I dare to hint to your lordship the deep responsibility of every parent however high his rank or distinguished his station. Our pupils, my lord, are the heirs of immortality, how then can we answer to ourselves if we suffer impetuous passions, wild and unrestrained desires, and obstinate self-will to disfigure and destroy what the great Creator has framed so fair, and endowed with gifts which, well applied, must render them capable of the most exalted happiness."

The Earl bowed, but was silent, and the physician perceived with concern that no corresponding feeling was excited in Lord Clanallan to those which filled his own pure

and pious bosom.—With regret on all sides the new friends took leave of each other, and reiterated promises of meeting again when Lady Rosabelle should return into Scotland, somewhat softened the tumultuous grief in which her ardent heart indulged itself when she bade adieu to friends so lately known, but already so justly dear to her.

“Now Rosabelle,” said the Earl, when her sobs and tears had a little exhausted themselves, “we have yet another hour before we quit Edinburgh, if you like it we will go to the shop where we saw those curious pebbles the other day ; although Miss Bruce could not accept of them from a total stranger, there is no reason why you should not send them to her as a pledge of regard and acknowledgement of their politeness. The Doctor would accept of no fee for his advice to-day, (some of which indeed he might have spared) and I do not wish to lie under obligations to him. Should you like to send these things to Margaret Bruce ?” “Oh yes ! indeed, indeed papa, I hope they are not sold !” “I gave the man a hint,” said the Earl, “not to dispose of them, ’till he heard from me, and I dare say they are still in his possession.”

The carriage was therefore ordered, and the Earl and Lady Rosabelle drove in all haste to the shop, where they purchased the beautiful fossils Miss Bruce had so much admired, a necklace and bracelets for Jane, and at a Bookseller’s in the neighbourhood some valuable books for the Doctor, with which they returned to their apartments, where, while the Earl wrote a polite note to the Doctor requesting his acceptance of the books, Rosabelle at his desire, thus addressed her young friends, in the very first letter she had ever written.

“ My dear Miss Bruce and Jane,

“ Papa desires me to write, and I should like it vastly myself, if I did not know I was such a bad writer, and never wrote a letter before in all my life. But you are so good natured and kind, that you will not laugh at me, though it is all my own fault that I am not as good at writing as I dare say you are, and Jane too,—for I am writing most to Margaret.—Well, as I said before, it is my own fault, for papa wanted me to have a governess and I would not. I wish I could get a governess like Margaret, for then I would have her directly, cost what she would, and I should like better to be like you than to be a Countess, which I hope I shall soon, but you will not care for me the more for that, which is very odd, for I thought every body cared for such things till I saw you, and you never told me so but I don't think you do. I mean care for Countesses,—Well, this is bad writing, and poor stuff I think, but I hope the next will be better. Will you please (Margaret) to accept the pebbles which you would not have the day I saw you first; oh, I shall always love that day! and you, Jane, the necklace and bracelets, which are the prettiest I can get, they never having any thing one wants at that foolish shop, and we had not much time.—I will bring you better when I come back to Scotland. Pray don't forget me. My hand aches so, never writing so much before, that I must leave off; good by, dear, dear Margaret, and Jane,

I am,

Your affectionate friend,

ROSABELLE MACALPINE.

P.S.—Excuse blots and blunders.—I put that because Sinclair always used, at the bottom of her letters to her sister; so I suppose one ought, and I am sure I need, for there are enough.

The Earl could not help smiling at this original composition, but unwilling to make any alteration as the spelling was tolerable, he despatched it with the presents as it was; and in a few minutes afterwards, they departed from Edinburgh.

Nothing of any moment occurred for some time after their arrival at Bath.

The Earl was anxiously employed in negotiating the business, which he doubted not would terminate in making his daughter a Countess in her own right; while she, retaining the desire to learn music, which her transient visit to the Bruce's had inspired, paid considerable attention to her master; and very soon showed that a correct ear, and a flexible and powerful voice would enable her to become a fine singer. She also learned dancing, in which she took great pleasure; and her carriage and appearance improved daily. The Earl already saw the brightened eye, the expanding forehead, and the round and delicately coloured cheek, which Dr. Bruce had predicted as the consequence of her improved mind;—and though the lip was too often curled by disdain, and the brow too frequently knit by angry vehemence, he thought her fast approaching to perfection, and doubted not that her increasing reason would subdue the turbulence of her temper. Reason alone could not do this: had he by

precept and example endeavoured gradually to awaken in her heart a truly religious spirit, its tumultuous passions would have been restrained, and finally conquered.

A desire of imitating the manners of those young ladies she met at the dancing academy, as far as exterior observances went, and the fear of ridicule, however her pride forbade her to confess it, corrected in some measure the abrupt and careless demeanour of Rosabelle, but although she no longer repeated, “ *I will* do this,” and “ *I chuse* to do that,” in her former rude and imperious tone; the *will* and the *choice*, though less eagerly expressed, were still the *real* motives of her actions; and no genuine wish to please, or make happy those around her, still less any fear of offending Him, who made her, restrained her language, or softened her conduct.

Whatever she liked to do, or to have, she still required; nor did the thought of extravagance, or of the abuse of those gifts with which she was entrusted, ever lessen her expenses or prevent her from gratifying herself, at whatever hazard.

The Earl and his daughter had been settled about six weeks in Bath, when in passing through one of the streets in her carriage, Lady Rosabelle’s fancy was struck by the sight of some beautiful foreign birds for sale; she alighted, and entering the shop, examined their fine plumage, and listened to their various notes with great pleasure. She immediately purchased two or three at an immense price, and amongst them a very fine, but very noisy and troublesome Macaw. These she carried home with great delight, and immediately placed them in a back room, where she could

visit them whenever she pleased, without being annoyed by their noise when it became troublesome.

The house Lord Clanallan had taken was large, and situated in one of the best streets in the upper town of Bath; but as it is usual in great cities where land is valuable, the windows of the next house approached very closely to the back windows of Lord Clanallan's, and Rosabelle's bed-room was divided only by a slight partition wall from some of the apartments in the next house. From the room in which her birds were now hung, and which used to be the room where she received her masters, she had frequently heard the sound of childrens' voices, and particularly the cries of a young infant. Several times she had murmured at this noise, and saying that it disturbed her studies, had threatened to complain to her papa, "Of the troublesome people at the next door." When she bought her birds, however, she changed her place of study, and thought no more of her former subject of discontent.

The Macaw, in his splendid cage, was hung out at the window as soon as the sun came upon it in the morning; and united his loud and discordant screams to the incessant noise of a parrot, who laughed, sung, and whistled, from morning till night, while two Canary birds assisted with their piercing notes, from day-break till the close of evening, to drive repose and peace from all who were within hearing.

Double doors securely closed, and the distance of the other rooms, prevented the inhabitants of Lord Clanallan's house from being disturbed by them: whether or not they

annoyed the people who resided near, Lady Rosabelle never gave herself the trouble to inquire, or even to consider. But now a new source of vexation assailed her; the quiet which hitherto had been sedulously preserved in her Ladyship's sleeping-room, to which no domestic ever approached but with cautious steps, lest her repose should be interrupted; was, in three or four days after the purchase of her birds, invaded by the shrill cries of an infant, and the murmuring tones of those who tried to soothe it by soft songs or tender accents.

Violently ringing her bell at five o'clock one morning, Lady Rosabelle summoned her astonished attendant to her bed-side, who entered in the full expectation of finding her very ill:—she was half raised in her bed, with indignation flashing from her eyes; “Sinclair,” she exclaimed, “what is the meaning of all this noise?” “Noise, my Lady! I heard none,” replied Sinclair, who began to think her delirious. “No, I dare say not, no doubt you have been sleeping comfortably enough, while I am distracted with the squalling of some cross baby, and the singing and chattering of its impertinent nurse!—Go directly into the next house and tell the people to make the child be quiet, or else take it away, for I cannot get a moment's sleep for it.” “Now, my Lady! must I go now?—it is so early, the people will think——” “I do not care what they think, do as I tell you directly;—and tell them if they do not get further off from me I will have them all severely punished.”

Sinclair reluctantly left the room to go on this ridiculous errand, and Rosabelle flouncing round in her bed endeavour-

ed once more to compose herself to sleep. In vain however, were all her attempts; the cries still continued, and after waiting with what she considered amazing patience, for nearly half an hour, she again rung her bell more violently than ever; and Sinclair, with slow and unwilling steps, once more made her appearance. "Well," exclaimed the fair tyrant, "have you been?" "Yes, my Lady." "And what is the reason they do not stop the noise?" "I could only see a servant my Lady, who came to the door half drest, and she said the child was ill, and indeed they could not hinder it from crying." "How extremely impertinent! Did you tell her that you came from *me*?" "Yes, my Lady, and she said she could not help it, and then she muttered something about the Macaw, and shut the door in my face." "Well, I never heard such insolence; I will tell papa, and make him have them all punished." "Oh, but I assure you my Lady," answered Sinclair, "the people in this country do not care for their superiors; they will do just what they like in their own houses, if the king was their next door neighbour." "Don't tell me such nonsense Sinclair," answered Lady Rosabelle, "you shall never persuade me that my papa, the Earl of Clanallan, cannot punish such people as those, for disturbing me in such a shameful manner;—why, pray what are they?" "The master of the house, I believe my Lady, is a Silk-Mercer; his shop is not here, but down in ——— Street; and he has this house for his family because the air is better, and he is rich enough."

"A Silk-Mercer! defend me!" cried the imperious lady, "and am I to be disturbed in this manner by the squalling of a Silk-Mercer's baby!—well, I will take care

and never buy any thing of the man however!" "I do not suppose he will care, my Lady," said Sinclair, who had a secret pleasure in mortifying her young tyrant, "he has plenty of business I hear, and gets a great deal of money; and gives all his children a good education, which is far better than ——." "Than what, pray, Mrs. Sinclair?" asked Rosabelle in a pert tone. "Why, my Lady, then since I must speak it, than being a great Lady, and not behaving well." "Meaning me, I suppose, Mrs. Sinclair; I think the English air has infected you with insolence? You may go—and send Janet to me, you sha'n't dress me at all." "Indeed, my Lady," said the faithful Sinclair, who with all her faults loved the imperious Rosabelle, "I did not mean to be insolent, but after having been with you ever since you were born, I thought——" "I don't care what you thought, or what you meant; go away and send Janet, I shall get up and go to these people myself."

Poor Sinclair withdrew, and Janet quickly dressed Lady Rosabelle, who snatching up her bonnet and shawl, would have run at once into the next house, had not the humbled Sinclair presented herself at the door of her apartment. Rosabelle regarded her with resentful looks, but Sinclair ventured to say, "My Lord is gone out to breakfast ma'am; he desired me to tell your Ladyship" "Very well," said the pouting Rosabelle, attempting to pass her. "Won't your Ladyship please to breakfast before you go out?" "No—Yes—What signifies—I am only going to visit the all accomplished children of your favourite, the Silk-Mercer; and desire them to be less noisy." "I am sure Lady, they are no favourites of mine; I don't so much as

know them by sight ! But it is so early—your Ladyship will only see a servant, and an hour hence you could speak to the mistress of the house yourself ; and I dare say she will oblige your Ladyship if she can.” “ Yes—so I should suppose,” replied the cross girl ; “ send in breakfast then, and let me know when it is ready.” She then proceeded to her bird-room, without giving one kind word or look to poor Sinclair ; who, grieved at having offended her, stood watching the glances of her angry eyes.

The Macaw was in high beauty, and screamed with all his power at the sight of his young mistress, whom he already knew. She caressed and fed him, talked to the Parrot, and sung to the Canaries ; “ I must get a bird-organ,” she cried, “ to play to these pretty creatures ; I saw one in a shop the other day—I cannot think why I did not buy it ; and I should like a piping bullfinch such as the Miss Darlington’s have—they told me of it at the academy the other day, it whistles several tunes ; Janet do you know where I can buy one ?” “ No—indeed, my Lady, unless at the shop where your Ladyship bought these pretty darlings ;” for Janet, proud of being preferred to Sinclair, chose to flatter her young lady’s present taste ; though in her heart she wished all the birds were dead, as the cleaning and feeding them took up much of her time ; and the noise disturbed the inhabitants of the lady’s maids’ apartment at all their meals.

“ Well, I shall try by and by ; but Janet, what’s the reason my Canaries have no fresh groundsel.” “ It is so early, my Lady, Tom has not had time to go into the fields to get some.” “ Send him then—directly, and tell

him to bring plenty." "It is hardly grown up yet, my Lady, and he cannot always find it." "Then let him go farther, what signifies how far he goes? I am sure I won't have my birds neglected."

She now hastened to the breakfast-room, where Sinclair was waiting to pour out her tea, and endeavouring by every means to conciliate and restore her to good humour. She breakfasted however, in silence and displeasure; and as soon as her meal was ended, snatched up her bonnet and shawl, and flew down stairs.

Chapter IV.

The Bullfinch, and the Bird-Organ.

“JOHN,” cried Sinclair, “open the door for my Lady, and attend her.” Lady Rosabelle’s own man, in consequence of this order, followed her hasty steps. “Which is the door John,” said she, “where the people live whose children make such a noise; the Silk-Mercer’s, I think Sinclair calls him?” “Here, my Lady,” said the footman, “Knock at the door then, and wait for me,” she replied. The man obeyed; and his loud rap resounded through the street, and quickly brought a servant to the door to answer it. “I want to speak to your mistress,” said Rosabelle. “Please to walk in ma’am,” was the woman’s answer; looking at her as she spoke as if she partly recognised her person, “my mistress is up stairs.” “Send her to me,” said the imperious visitor, “tell her Lady Rosabelle Macalpine wants her.” “Yes, my Lady,—please to walk in, my Lady;”—and the girl would have shown her into a room at

the end of the passage, but seeing a door nearer—Rosabelle, unrestrained by any forms, pushed it open; and instantly found herself in a sort of study, or school-room.

Three fine girls, the eldest about fourteen, rose from their employments to receive her: they had a genteel looking young woman with them, who was at the moment turning a globe, and hearing one of the girls repeat her geography lesson; two boys were silently collecting their books into green satchels, with which they were evidently preparing to hasten to school, but both stood a moment suspended, looking at their extraordinary visitor. The governess rose, courtesied, and offered Lady Rosabelle a chair; which she declined with rather more civility than she had entered the room, for the neatness of the apartment, and the propriety of the children's dresses and manners, had somewhat raised her opinion of them. She walked towards the window, which looked into a little court; it was shut, and Rosabelle, to whom the warm atmosphere of Bath was always oppressive, said, "Why don't you open your window, it is very warm." "It is indeed, ma'am," said the governess; looking astonished at her abrupt manners, "but—" "They cannot open the window," said one of the boys hastily, who recognised in the strange visitor, the inhabitant of the next house, "because that abominable Macaw, and the rest of the noisy birds at the next door, scream and squall so that the girls cannot hear each other speak; I wish they were all in the sea, if I could get at them I believe I should wring their necks."

"Oh fie, Edmund, how can you talk so," said the eldest girl; while Rosabelle, her eyes darting indignant flashes,

and her cheeks crimson, exclaimed—"You! you! dare to touch my birds! if you did, I would have you—oh! I don't know what I would have done to you!" "Yours ma'am! how did I know they were yours?" returned the boy, "but be whose they will, they are a great nuisance, and ought to be sent out of the way." "Edmund, Edmund," said Miss Arnott, the governess, "I beg you will be silent, and go to school; I am sure your papa and mamma would be much displeased at your behaving so rudely." "Well, I will go directly," said the fine boy softening his voice, "good bye Miss Arnott, good bye girls, come Charles," and bowing silently to Lady Rosabelle they both departed. "I am sure," said the angry Rosabelle, "I admire any body in this house talking of noise, when I have not been able to close my eyes since day-break for the squalling and crying of a baby, belonging, my women tell me, to the people here!" The imperious tone of the speaker astonished the Miss Bartons and their governess, yet Rosabelle meant nothing particularly insolent; she was so used to talk of her women, and to call all who were not distinguished by rank or title, "people," that she was really not aware of the excessive pride and impertinence her language seemed to express.

While she yet spoke, and the young people were looking on each other in silent amazement, Mrs. Barton entered the room, and in a gentle and dejected tone, asked Lady Rosabelle if she wished to speak to her. She was pleasing in her person and manner, the tone of her voice sweet, and her accent and language perfectly correct, and like a gentlewoman. Her pale complexion and heavy eyes showed that she had passed a sleepless night. Her daughters, who

had not seen her before that morning, rose, and affectionately kissing her, asked her how she was, and if little Henry was better. "Oh no, not better at all my dears," she answered; while the tears stood in her eyes, "his feverish symptoms are rather increased, and the pain he suffers from his teeth seems to be very great; I have scarcely closed my eyes to-night."

Rosabelle, somewhat softened by this account, and struck by the tender sympathy and affection exhibited in the countenance of the children, now civilly returned Mrs. Barton's courtesy, and accepted the chair which was offered her. "Open the window, my dear," said Mrs. Barton to her daughter, "this room is too warm."

The eldest girl immediately did as she was desired, when instantly the united voices of Rosabelle's favourite birds, before heard indistinctly, assailed their ears in a most unpleasant manner. The loud screams of the Macaw, and the hoarse laugh of the parrot, united with the piercing song of the Canary birds to banish silence and peace from the apartment. Rosabelle, conscious that the annoyance must be extreme, blushed a little; while the girls casting their eyes upon each other, smiled expressively. Mrs. Barton sighed, and said, "You must shut the window again, my love;" and the window was again shut! "You wished to speak to me ma'am," said Mrs. Barton, turning to her half ashamed visitor, "may I trouble you to explain your commands; I believe I have the honour of speaking to Lady Rosabelle Macalpine." "Yes ma'am," said Rosabelle, "and I came—I wanted—I came to desire you would not let your child cry so much, it disturbs me so I

cannot sleep at all." "Alas," said Mrs. Barton with a sigh, "most gladly should I prevent it if possible—think my dear young lady, if you are disturbed, what *I* must be; you cannot suppose I would not quiet his most distressing cries if in my power."

"But you can move him into another room where *I* should not hear him," said Rosabelle.

"He *was* in another room," said Mrs. Barton, colouring a little, indignant at the selfish spirit her visitor displayed, "he *was* in another room—the room over this, which has always been my nursery, till your Ladyship's birds were placed in the adjoining apartment; their cries disturbed the infant, whose teeth were just in that state which causes great pain; he became restless, his natural sleep was broken by the unusual noise, and he has been in a high fever ever since; I hardly know whether we shall be able to save him," she added, while tears fell from her eyes, "for the room he now inhabits is close and warm, and increases his complaint; the room over this is airy and more wholesome, and gladly shall I replace him there, if— if your Ladyship would have the goodness to remove your birds."

"No indeed," said Rosabelle hastily rising, "I shall not remove my birds;—you can put the child in some other room." "We have no other room," said Mrs. Barton, speaking as mildly as she could; though her heart, swelled with sorrow and vexation, seemed hardly to allow her to speak at all, "our family is large—."

"Very well," said the ungracious Rosabelle, "then I

I suppose I shall, be obliged to leave my own bed-room for another;—I think it very hard. English people are so disobliging and impertinent—there is nobody in Scotland—nobody near Clanallan Castle that would dare to annoy me so!” “But your Ladyship will consider, that our child—” “No, I shall not consider any thing about it—I think you behave very rudely and ill, and I will tell every body not to buy silk of your husband.’

Speaking thus, she rudely flounced out of the room, and returned home in the worst humour imaginable.

In spite of her pride, and the unjust passion in which she indulged herself, there was a voice which murmured in her heart, and perpetually told her how ill she had behaved. The form of Margaret Bruce came to her remembrance, her gentle manners, her affectionate tones, and the sweetness with which she yielded up her own wishes to please and gratify others.

Was it by the imperious rudeness which Rosabelle had just displayed, that she could hope to imitate the virtues and attractions of her young Scotch friends? Would they thus harshly have replied, to the mild requests of Mrs. Barton? She felt conscious that they would not, for in every heart, however neglected and obdurate, the voice of conscience will be heard; and if attended to—would be that “law to himself,” which the Apostle speaks of, as given to man even in a state of nature.

Determined however, not to yield to the suggestions of a heart naturally kind and tender, nor to listen to the dic-

tates of reason, which her advancing years ought now to have made the rule of her actions, she stifled the impulses of conscience; and ordering her carriage, with Sinclair to attend her, went to the shop where she had seen the Bird-Organ, which she purchased; and by making inquiries she heard where a piping Bullfinch might be procured, which she also immediately bought; and thus having expended her time, and several guineas, in a way which at best was frivolous and useless, but under the particular circumstances of the moment, was perversely wicked, she returned home, and placing her new purchases in the bird-room endeavoured to amuse herself by playing on the organ, and exciting her favourites to make even more than their usual noise; as if to brave the persons who had offended her, as well as her own uneasy and reproaching heart! In vain was all the tumult by which she was surrounded;—in vain she tried to stifle the cries of conscience by talking to the Parrot, or singing to the Bullfinch.

The heat was excessive, languor stole over her, the pale cheeks and tearful eyes of Mrs. Barton incessantly pursued her; and, as in passing through the apartments she caught the sound of the infant's cries, her unhappiness increased; and wretched amidst all the indulgencies which wealth could purchase, or almost unbounded power obtain, she wandered about her solitary abode dissatisfied, restless, unhappy; and envying the girls whose innocent comforts she had so cruelly diminished,—the tender kiss of their mother, and the calm serenity of mind which was visible in their countenances!

Lord Clanallan spent the day abroad, and at an early

hour having ordered another chamber to be prepared for her she retired to it, and vainly sought the repose she did not deserve to find! All night long, though actually removed from all sound of the infant's cries, her ears rung with the fancied tones of that distressing voice. The form of Mrs. Barton glided before her, and seemed to reproach her with what she had made her suffer,

Silence and darkness which ensure the tranquil repose of the innocent added new terrors to her reflections, and it was not till morning that she fell into an uneasy slumber, in which she dreamed of Margaret and Jane, fancied she saw them holding and caressing the sick infant of Mrs. Barton, soothing its distressed mother; and that when she herself attempted to approach them, they repulsed her with scorn and anger, saying, "Go wicked girl, you are cruel and unfeeling, we will never love you again!" She waked with the tears streaming down her cheeks, salutary tears, for they were those of sorrow and repentance.

She meditated how she might (without too deeply wounding her own pride, which still struggled in her heart,) reconcile herself to the Bartons, and to her own feelings, and while she yet lay reflecting on the past, and endeavouring to arrange some plan for the future, Sinclair entered the room and unclosing her curtains prepared to assist her in dressing.

The voice of Sinclair, Rosabelle thought sounded as if something had distressed her, and when she looked in her face she saw that the eyes of the faithful woman were swelled with crying. Rosabelle, whose previous reflections had lowered her haughty spirit, and softened her feelings, put her arms

round Sinclair's neck, and said in a tone unusually affectionate, "What is the matter, my dear Sinclair, you look unhappy, has any body done any thing to vex or offend you?" "Oh no, my dear young Lady," said Sinclair, whose tears flowed afresh, "nothing to vex *me*." "What then is the matter?" said Rosabelle, "and for what have you been crying?" "I am afraid, my Lady, you will be angry if I tell you," answered Sinclair. "No, no, I will not be angry indeed,—I am not in a humour to be angry with any body," said Rosabelle, adding in a lower tone, "except myself."

Sinclair looked at her with surprise, not unmingled with joy.

When had she heard her young lady speak so mildly, so affectionately? When, above all, had she heard her even in a whisper condemn herself? "Indeed, my dear Lady," she said, "I hope you will not be displeased, but my very heart ached for the poor baby at the next door, whose piteous cries, rung in our ears all night, but so evidently growing weaker, that I feared he was extremely ill; so this morning as soon as I was up, I could not help going in to inquire for him and his poor mamma, who nurses him, and is half breaking her heart about him."

Sinclair paused and looked wistfully in the face of Rosabelle, to see if any marks of anger hovered on her brow;—but she saw downcast eyes, a varying complexion, and an expression of shame and sorrow, which increased her surprise.

"And how was the child, Sinclair?" Lady Rosabelle tre-

mulously inquired, "Oh my Lady, very bad indeed! the Doctor has been there this morning, the maid tells me, and says, if the child is not removed to a cooler room, where he can be kept perfectly quiet, he cannot live; nor does he know whether even that can now save him, though yesterday he was sure it would;—and they are in the greatest distress, for the child is too ill to be carried out of the house, and the room where he used to be, the only large airy room in the house."

"Is that which the noise of my birds renders so uncomfortable!" eagerly exclaimed Rosabelle, "Oh, I knew that yesterday, and yet I would not remove them, but out of downright wickedness, went and bought more, and made a noise with the organ, and oh! I was so very, very naughty?—Surely the child will not die Sinclair! you don't think he will die?"

"Indeed, my Lady," replied Sinclair, "it is impossible to say, you have heard what the Doctor says, perhaps if he is removed immediately,"—"Instantly, this moment he shall be," cried the impetuous Rosabelle, "give me my clothes, dress me as quickly as possible:—no, stop,—send Janet and the other maids, and tell them to take away the birds directly; let them all fly; give them to any body that will have them; do any thing to get rid of them."

"But my dear young Lady," said the more moderate Sinclair, "if you please we can easily remove the birds without sending them out of the house,—there is a large room at the top of the house, exactly fit for them, where they will have the morning sun, plenty of air, and can disturb nobody; it will only be a little more trouble to you to go to them, and as you like them so much—"

"Oh, no; I do not like them," cried Rosabelle, "I never shall like them again,—if the poor baby dies I shall never bear the sight of them, and I shall hate myself as long as I live; do what you will with them, only make

the maids move them this moment, and then dress me as quickly as possible."

Gladly Sinclair went on her welcome errand, and speedily returning, Rosabelle was soon drest, and taking her bonnet without waiting for any attendance, or regarding the entreaties of Sinclair to know where she was going, she flew down stairs, and rushed impatiently into the house of Mr. Barton.

Chapter V.

Repentance.—Forgiveness.—Good Impressions.

THE hall door stood open, and no one appearing in the passage, Lady Rosabelle hastily entered the room in which she had been before ; but it was empty, and appeared as if no one had been there that morning. She paused a moment, and considered in what manner she should let the family know she was there, when the faint cries of the sick infant broke on her ear, and at the same time she heard suppress sobs, as of some one in great distress at the top of the staircase which was placed very near the door of the room in which she stood.

She softly went to the foot of the stairs, and listening, still heard the sobs and sighs ; she went up a few steps and caught sight of the eldest Miss Barton, who, covering her face with

her handkerchief, stood evidently weeping as she leant on the baluster of the stairs.

Instantly, the hasty Rosabelle ascended, and catching hold of Miss Barton's frock, exclaimed, "Oh, why are you crying so? is the child worse?"

The surprised Emily Barton withdrew her handkerchief, and seeing Lady Rosabelle, started, coloured, and repulsing her, though without violence, turned away and entered a room near the spot where they stood, and locking the door effectually precluded any farther advances from her eager neighbour; with whom, it was evident, she did not desire to have any intercourse.

Notwithstanding the reproachful glance which Emily had cast upon her as she withdrew, the angry spirit of Rosabelle, was for once subdued, and she felt grief rather than resentment, for a repulse, which her heart told her she had but too well merited. A moment she stood, uncertain how to act, when the door of the room in which she heard the feeble cries of the suffering infant was hastily thrown open, and Charlotte, the second girl rushed out, exclaiming, "Anne, Kitty, bring salts,—water,—send for papa,—send for Doctor C.;—mamma is dying,—oh!—mamma is dying!"

Terrified, confounded, hardly sensible of what she did, Rosabelle found herself in the chamber where this scene of distress was exhibited. In one corner was placed Mrs. Barton, supported by Miss Arnott, and just recovering from a fainting fit; at her feet, clasping her knees, the youngest girl; a nurse stood by the bed-side holding the infant, whose

livid face, and closed eyes, seemed to indicate that his sufferings would soon be over, while his low moans, and convulsed features declared that they were still exquisitely painful.

“ Lady Rosabelle !” said Miss Arnott, oh, why here !— Pray, pray retire, we are already sufficiently distressed !” “ Yes, yes ; I know it ! I see it ! and I—I—am the wicked cause !” cried the agitated Rosabelle, sinking at the feet of Mrs. Barton ; who, as she slowly recovered gazed on her with amazement, “ It is not yet too late,” she added, “ oh, do not say it is too late ! I have had all my birds moved, they shall never disturb you again, only forgive me ! Pray forgive me ! Oh,” she cried, turning towards the infant, and stretching out her hands, “ if you die, poor, poor baby, I shall never forgive myself !” “ Rise, Lady Rosabelle !” said the trembling Mrs. Barton, “ humble not yourself thus to me !” “ I ought to humble myself, I do, and will humble myself !” exclaimed Rosabelle, weeping, “ only say you forgive me !” “ Yes, yes, indeed,” said Mrs. Barton, “ from my heart I forgive you, and thank you for ever !” “ Do not thank me,—do not thank me,—” said Rosabelle, “ I cannot bear it !—And you forgive me !—and, I know if I had been in your place, instead of forgiving, I should have hated and driven you from me, I should have loaded you with reproaches !” “ Far” said Mrs. Barton, gently raising her eyes to heaven, “ far be such a spirit from me,—far, my dear, young Lady may it be from you. As Christians we are bound to forgive those who injure us, and to receive with meekness their assurances of repentance.” “ I do not know what you mean,” said Rosabelle, struck with surprise, “ I do not understand what you are talking of !” “ Not know !—not understand !”—said Mrs. Barton, “ my poor child how I feel for you ! She has no

mother," she added, turning to Miss Arnott, "but surely you must, Lady Rosabelle, have been taught the first principles of the christian religion?" "Yes," said Rosabelle, blushing, "Sinclair has talked to me sometimes about such things, and made me read in the bible when she could, but I did not much attend to her, I thought it was only her old-fashioned notions." "Poor thing!" again, said Mrs. Barton, with looks of pity. "Perhaps, some day," said Rosabelle timidly, "you will tell me all about it." "Willingly, gladly, to the best of my ability," said Mrs. Barton, while a flush of joy overspread her countenance, "but now,"—"Oh, now I know this is no time," said Rosabelle, "pray, pray remove the dear baby immediately, I will order everybody in our house to be silent and quiet. Can I do any thing else,—shall I send for more physicians,—do let me,—I will pay them,—I will buy any thing that you think will do him good, or you either,—poor, dear, Mrs. Barton, that I have made suffer so cruelly!" "Nothing, now, Lady Rosabelle," said Miss Arnott, "you had better if you please leave us now." "Yes, yes, I know it, I will not trouble you any longer,—only if there should be any thing,—if I can do any thing,—will you let me know?" "Certainly," said Miss Arnott, "but quiet and a cooler air will at present be best for us all."

Rosabelle looked a moment on the infant, prest the cold languid hand of Mrs. Barton, and retired. Her orders for silence and quiet were gladly obeyed by her servants, and to her frequent inquiries in the course of the day for the infant, the answers were rather more favourable than they had been in the morning.

She charged Sinclair when she retired to rest, to make the earliest inquiry, and had the comfort of hearing when she rose next day that the child and its mother had passed a better night, and the physician hoped the baby might recover.

Two or three times in the course of the day she went in herself, but saw only Miss Arnott, who seemed almost as much alarmed for Mrs. Barton, as she was for the child; saying that her appetite was so bad, she took scarcely any sustenance, and was almost sinking from exhaustion. Rosabelle's active mind, eager to make every possible atonement for her fault caught at this hint.

Lord Clanallan's cook was instantly employed to prepare the most nourishing and tempting viands. Bath was searched to procure every dainty that money could purchase, and all were sent to Mrs. Barton, with the most affectionate entreaties that she would accept and try to partake of them.

Who, with all her faults, could help loving this warm-hearted girl?

What a pity that her virtues and good deeds should thus arise, merely from impulses. That she had not been taught to ground herself on the principles of religion, and to seek the assistance of that Holy Spirit, who can alone establish and confirm every good intention!

Not a day now passed in which Rosabelle did not visit the Bartons', stealing often to the nursery, which the removal of her birds had once more rendered habitable, she watched

with anxiety and tenderness the gradual recovery of the infant Henry, and as she saw returning intelligence beam from his eyes and his little mouth dimpling with smiles, she rejoiced in being spared the anguish she must have felt had she persisted in her follies till his recovery was impossible.

With kind endearments she endeavoured to win his affection, and as he became reconciled to the presence of a stranger, and began to smile at her approach, she lavished upon him every play-thing that she thought might please and amuse him.

By attentions like these, she obliterated every trace of resentment and dislike from the minds of all the family, and her carriage was now ordered every morning to take him and his still drooping mother into the air, which more than any thing renewed their strength, and soon the blush of health began again to enliven the cheeks of both.

Lord Clanallan, who was but too much in the habit of leaving his thoughtless child to her own devices contented himself with ascertaining that the Bartons' were people of the most respectable character, however in station inferior to himself, and was rather pleased than otherwise at Rosabelle's good nature in lending her carriage for the accommodation of a sick child.

With all which had preceded these attentions, the Earl was but slightly acquainted, he had heard from his daughter a confused account of her sorrow for the child's illness of which she considered the noise of her birds to be the chief cause, in consequence of which she had removed them ; but he had

listened with little attention to a detail which had scarcely interested him: not deficient in humanity, he was not sorry that Rosabelle should pity, and endeavour to mitigate the distress she had caused; but his mind and time were now much occupied in perfecting those schemes for her advancement which were the chief object of his wishes; and having satisfied himself that the Bartons were not people who would injure her mind,—her manner, or her character—he was rather pleased that Rosabelle should sometimes be with them—than left, as she often must otherwise have been—with only Sinclair.

His pride he compromised by reflecting that their stay in Bath would be short, and that her connection with persons so much beneath her in rank would naturally terminate.

He was now obliged to go to London, for having exerted all the influence his wealth and connections could give him to forward the conclusion of all his anxieties, the hearing of his cause before the House of Lords was speedily to take place, previously to which he had much to consult his lawyers upon—he therefore left Rosabelle under the care of Sinclair, and to cultivate her new connection, not expecting to return in less than a month.

The child gained strength every day, and Rosabelle became so much attached to him, that her wishes would have led her to an almost constant residence in his nursery. She often thought of Mrs. Barton's expressions on the day when she had implored her forgiveness, and wished to investigate the nature of those principles which had induced her so

readily to accord it. But she knew not how to introduce the subject, she was seldom alone with Mrs. Barton; and an unpleasant sensation, a sort of bashfulness made her dislike to open the subject when the young people were present; yet from what she witnessed accidentally of their manners and sentiments, of the motives which they sometimes assigned for actions which she did not comprehend, many new ideas were busy in her mind; she laboured to reduce them to order, and by looking into the books she saw them read, and by the efforts of her own reason, to obtain some clear knowledge of the principles by which the conduct of this excellent family was regulated. Much, however, still remained unexplained; and every day brought with it a resolution of conversing with Mrs. Barton, on what Rosabelle felt to be of the utmost importance, yet every day closed without her having effected her purpose.

On the second Sunday evening after the commencement of her acquaintance with them, having as usual been once at church, and spent the afternoon in a long airing, she found herself as the day closed, tired of her usual occupations. The sermon which she had heard in the morning, she had endeavoured with uncommon attention to understand; it had revived with new force her wishes to obtain knowledge, which she evidently saw her new friends considered as far more important than any other. And had her father been at home, she felt a sort of conviction that he would not have encouraged her growing inclination for serious subjects.

Sinclair's vague, though well-meant explanations, could

not satisfy the strong and inquiring mind of Lady Rosabelle; and she suddenly determined to go to Mrs. Barton, and ask her—as she had promised on the first day of their acquaintance, to tell her (as Rosabelle phrased it,) “ All about it.” “ Readily, gladly,” Mrs. Barton had said, “ And readily, gladly,” would Rosabelle have attended to the promised explanation. With her usual impetuosity she ran up the steps of Mrs. Barton’s house, “ Is Mrs. Barton at home?” she said to the servant who answered her knock at the door. “ Yes, my Lady ;—but——”

Without waiting to have the hesitating *but*—explained, or her name announced, she ran at once to the usual sitting-room, and opened the door. The perfect quiet of the apartment somewhat surprized her, in general a hum of busy voices, reading, reciting, or in cheerful conversation was heard when she joined the young party towards evening in Mrs. Barton’s parlour; and lately, hands kindly extended, proffered kisses from the younger girls, and looks of pleasure from all had greeted her approach. But now all was still, and every one looked surprised at her sudden entrance.

In one corner, Miss Arnott, and the two youngest girls were placed.

Miss Arnott held a book in her hand, and the girls were repeating something with grave faces, and thoughtful looks. Mrs. Barton and Emily were reading, and many books as for occasional reference were laid open upon the table. Rosabelle felt awkward, and as they paused and looked up

on her entrance, she stood for a moment suspended, and thought she interrupted them. "Must not I come in?" she said—"are you about any thing that I shall interrupt?"

"I know not why you should, Lady Rosabelle," said Mrs. Barton, holding out her hand and smiling, kindly, "for though we do not usually admit visitors on Sundays, we will not consider you as a stranger."

"No, pray don't," said Rosabelle, clasping the hand that she held, "I should like of all things to know what you are doing; I dare say it is something good, and I came on purpose to ask you to explain a great many things to me. What are Charlotte and Bella about? what are they saying?—Do they say lessons on Sunday—I thought it was a holiday."

"They are saying their catechism," said Mrs. Barton. "Oh, I know what *that* is," answered Rosabelle, "and Sinclair would have taught it me, but I did not understand it, and I would not learn it." "Well then Lady Rosabelle, will you sit down and listen quietly while they repeat, and Miss Arnott explains it. If you like to make one of our family party you must be very quiet."

"I will, I will indeed," she replied; sitting down and listening in silent attention to the clear and simple explanation Miss Arnott gave, as the children proceeded in their examination.

“ Well Lady Rosabelle,” said Mrs. Barton as they finished, “ do you now understand what you have heard ? ”

“ A great deal of it,” she answered, “ and in time I dare say I should be able to know more about it.” She then asked some questions as to such parts as had been least intelligible to her, showing such intelligence and docility as promised the most favourable results, and made Mrs. Barton more than ever regret that so fine a mind, and such excellent dispositions had been left so totally uncultivated. She passed the rest of the evening in this amiable family, in such exercises of the heart and understanding as had been always usual with them, but were new to her : and as there was neither moroseness nor bigotry in their conversation and behaviour, she was delighted with all that passed. Towards the close of the evening, Mr. Barton and his two sons who had been reading in another room, joined them ; and a short and devotional form of family prayer concluded their well-spent day.

“ And are these the things,” said Rosabelle as she stood by Mrs. Barton just before she took her leave, “ are these the things that make you all so good ; and taught you to forgive me so kindly when I was so very—very naughty ? ”

“ These are the things,” said Mrs. Barton, “ if by these things you mean the study of the Holy Scriptures, and the exercise of rational devotion, which alone, with the assistance of the divine blessing, can teach not only *us*, but *all* to do their duty, and endeavour to improve in virtue. And these things my dear Lady Rosabelle, far—far beyond all that the power and greatness of this world can bestow,

will I hope, be henceforth as familiar to you as they are to us."

She then tenderly wished her good night, and Rosabelle returned to her own abode ; carrying with her a mind awakened to thoughts and intentions which wanted but further instruction, and the influence of that divine power from which they proceeded, to confirm and raise into the highest attainments of Christian Piety.

Chapter VI.

*Gratified Ambition.—Prejudices.—An Ornamented
Structure, on a Sandy Foundation.*

BUT this fair prospect of improvement, this connection which might have ultimately been the means of correcting all that was wrong, and confirming all that was right in the character of Lady Rosabelle, was suddenly concluded.

A few days brought letters from Lord Clanallan, announcing in triumphant and joyous terms, the conclusion of his important business ; and the defeat of his antagonist. These letters were soon followed by his personal appearance ; when, with rapturous joy he hailed his daughter as Countess of Glenross, and the heiress of all the estates connected with the title.

With sparkling eyes, and a countenance animated by joy, the fond father expatiated on the brilliant lot he had thus secured for his daughter ; he promised her a liberal,—

it might in fact be called an extravagant allowance, considering her age, from the day on which she should assume her new dignity.

A splendid equipage, her mother's jewels new set, and to be her's when she should be sixteen; in short, every thing that rank and fortune could bestow, were rapidly engaged for, and might have turned a more steady head than that of the childish and ill-educated Rosabelle. If her whole mind was not taken possession of by these brilliant visions, it was because some lingering traces remained of those lessons she had the night before received from Mrs. Barton. Some floating ideas of the perishable and uncertain nature of all worldly advantages, and the "far more exceeding," and immutable glories of futurity hung upon her recollection, and somewhat checked the rapturous delight with which she would otherwise have hailed the brilliant pictures of splendour and greatness which her father sketched so skilfully.

But these feelings in a mind so young, and so ill-guided, could not be expected to last long; and as she listened to the Earl her bosom swelled with proud delight, and her sparkling eyes expressed the pleasure with which she gradually yielded her whole heart to the charms of wealth and grandeur.

Alas, why was no kind friend, no tender mother near, to allay a little the thirst for pleasure and power which now seized upon the ardent mind of Rosabelle? Why none to point out to her, that such gifts as were lavished upon her, were "talents" entrusted to her care; that in the increased power of doing good, and making others happy, she would

find the greatest felicity which riches, almost unbounded, could bestow ! How much did she want a clear sighted and disinterested friend to check the haughty ideas which led her to suppose herself a being lifted above the common lot of humanity, endowed with powers scarcely any other could equal !

Now and then, a kind thought of the Bartons', mingled with the dreams of pomp and self-gratification, which rapidly swept through her imagination. Was there any thing she could do for them ? Might she not here-after be a friend to the young people in their progress through life ? These were questions she frequently asked herself ; but, alas !—thoughts like these, were

Like the dew on opening flowers—

As bright, as transient too !—

She saw Mrs. Barton, and the children, in the course of the day ; and felt while she was with them, much regret that they must part so soon, and that there was little probability they should ever meet again. She hung sorrowfully over the little Henry, whose playful innocence had obtained no slight hold on her affections. To him she gave the memorable bird-organ, which had caused her so much vexation ; the little fellow being much delighted with its cheerful tones. To every one in the family she gave handsome keep-sakes ; to the servants she was liberal, and no one saw her depart without forgetting her faults, and regretting the loss of one so warm-hearted.

Nevertheless, a sigh escaped the presaging heart of the good Mrs. Barton, who could have felt even maternal love

for the poor neglected Rosabelle, for such, notwithstanding her rank and wealth, she could not help considering her. "Dear girl," she said, "what a bright example of every virtue might she become, were she but taught to restrain from *principle*, the impulses of a heart and temper but too liable to err."

"But now, the sport of feeling; ardent, impetuous, haughty and disdainful, even the best dispositions of her mind will but more acutely point the sorrows her imperious spirit too probably prepares for her! Happier—far happier my children are those, who in a lower walk of life are taught by precept and example to restrain their passions and moderate their desires, than Lady Rosabelle at the summit of all the world can give—without a friend, without a mother, to check,—to lead,—to direct her!"

As the splendid equipage of the Earl attended by outriders, and all the accompaniments which wealth and taste could furnish, passed the door of Mr. Barton, Rosabelle leaned eagerly from the window, and after kissing her hand repeatedly to Mrs. Barton and the girls, drew back with a sigh, while tears of regret sprung to her eyes. "You seem sorry to leave your new, though humble friends Rosabelle," said the Earl, "I believe they are very good people."

"Excellent people," said Rosabelle, "I know not when I shall ever meet with any like them!" "Pho, pho!" said the Earl peevishly, "you are always in extremes; such people as the Barton's need not be so deeply regretted,

it is quite as well that your intimacy with those so inferior should be broken off." " Inferior in degree certainly, papa," said Rosabelle with warmth, " but far my superiors in all goodness ;—oh I am so sorry to leave Mrs. Barton ! I hoped to learn from her so many things that I wanted to know, that are so essential."

" Nonsense child !" said the Earl, " you run away with every thing so eagerly ! What on earth, could Mrs. Barton teach you, which you cannot learn far better of the best masters in London ?" " Oh," replied Rosabelle, blushing a little, " but I do not believe—I am sure there are no masters to teach what I was to have learned from Mrs. Barton."

" What were you to have learned of her, Rosabelle ?" said the Earl laughing, " to make puddings and pies, and mend your stockings ?" " No papa," said Rosabelle, half offended, " though I doubt not Mrs. Barton could have done those things if she thought it right ; but she need not, she has proper people to do them for her."

" Well then, Rosabelle," answered the Earl, " what mighty matters were you to have learned of Mrs. Barton, had you luckily remained long enough in Bath to acquire all the sciences, I doubt not, she teaches so admirably ?"

" You are laughing at me I know, papa," said Rosabelle, " but I shall not be in a passion as I used to be, for Mrs. Barton says it is very wrong and sinful to be impatient

and angry for every trifle." "Nay, there" said the Earl more seriously, "she is right; and if she could have taught you to govern your temper, she would indeed have taught you something worth knowing." "And so she would papa, I do not doubt," said Rosabelle eagerly, "for she was going to begin from the beginning with me, and teach me to read the scriptures,—and explain to me how I ought to be ruled and directed by them,—and to make me good and religious like herself." "Religious!" said the Earl, looking at her with surprize, "it is then indeed time to remove you!—What, I suppose she is a Methodist; and wants to make you one!" "A Methodist, papa!" returned Rosabelle, "what is that?—If it is any thing bad, I am sure Mrs. Barton is not one!"

The Earl was, like many people in the habit of using that mis-applied word—very ill able to explain it; he hesitated, and at length said,—“Why, a Methodist—... what people call a Methodist—is, your over-righteous persons who go to meeting instead of the church; and talk incessantly about religion,—and wear plain formal clothes,—and look dismal,—and think the common amusements of life quite sinful!”

“Oh then papa, indeed—indeed, Mrs. Barton is not a Methodist,” replied Rosabelle:—“I do not to be sure, very well know what you mean by being *over-righteous*, but I am sure she is not always talking about religion; so far from it, I have waited a whole fortnight before I could find an opportunity of talking to her on the subject. She never goes to meeting, but always to church, and so do all her children;

—she dresses just as she should do at her age, always with elegant neatness;—and as to looking dismal, she is remarkably cheerful; and often quite lively and playful,—laughing—singing,—and frequently dancing with the children.”

“ Well, all this may be very true, and doubtless is very fine,” replied the Earl; “ but I am notwithstanding, far from sorry that you are removed from a possibility of cultivating this intimacy any farther. I foresee you would have acquired narrow and illiberal notions, and become quite quizzical and formal. It is all very well to be serious at proper times, and to go to church, and endeavour to do one’s duty, but to talk of carrying religious notions into the common affairs of life—and pretending to be always thinking of such things, is what *I* call Methodistical; and only tends to make people either enthusiasts or hypocrites.”

All these hard names, and the air of contempt with which the Earl spoke, made poor Rosabelle think she must indeed have been mistaken; and should probably have become one of those characters her father so much deprecated, had she remained within the influence of Mrs. Barton;—she shook off therefore as fast as possible, all regret for leaving her; and the Earl had soon sufficient reason to know that no traces of Mrs. Barton’s narrow notions and enthusiastical tenets remained upon the mind of his daughter.

A superb house in Park Lane, glittering equipages at her command, and a round of such amusements as were

consistent with her early age, were now presented to the new made Countess. Conscious of her deficiencies when compared with other young ladies, she readily consented to add a governess to her establishment.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was a gentlewoman by birth and education, though a series of misfortunes had rendered the situation offered to her in Lord Clanallan's family very desirable; a carriage at her command, a table elegantly served for the young Countess and herself, and a very ample allowance were insured to her in return for her time, and the dedication of no common talents to the improvement of her pupil.

With the aid of the best masters, Rosabelle's person, manners, and mind, soon became every thing the Earl desired; for he bounded his wishes by the attainment of such graces and accomplishments as an understanding like Rosabelle's, so assisted, found no difficulty in acquiring. In music, dancing, drawing, and the light ornamental works proper for her age and quality, she soon became a complete proficient; nor was her mind less stored with elegant literature. A just and discriminating taste, and an excellent memory, soon made her mistress of all that was most valuable amongst the authors of her own country;—she understood several languages, and spoke French with fluency and readiness. Her face and figure were beautiful;—her voice, in speaking, as well as in singing, harmonious and pleasing;—her movement and carriage, elegant and graceful.

What then was wanting to perfection?—What more, at

the age of sixteen, could have been desired for the youthful Countess of Glenross?—Yet there was a deficiency.—All that early neglect had laid waste, was not repaired :—all that improper indulgence had fostered was not destroyed.

A general sense of religious duties had been inculcated by Mrs. Fitzpatrick :—an observance of morality and virtue had been taught ;—the softness and decorum of female manners had been assiduously cultivated ; but the selfish *will* had not been subdued ;—the grand duty of feeling for, and acting towards others as you would desire they should do by you ;—the real gentleness of the heart, the true humility of the Christian were still wanting ; the heart was unchanged ! The evil spirits of pride and anger were like those we read of in the pleasing fictions of Arabia, confined within the frail casket of Rosabelle's heart ; but the *Seal of Solomon*, or true wisdom, had not yet been impressed upon it to prevent them from again breaking out to tyrannize more imperiously than ever !

Occasional sallies of anger and passionate resentment against those who were obliged to submit to her humours, —a selfish disregard of their comfort and tranquility,—an opinion that nothing ought to impede the slightest of her wishes,—that her will was—and ought to be law over all those who formed her establishment,—a law from which she scarcely excepted her father and Mrs. Fitzpatrick,—(over whom she exercised all the sway that a determined spirit and superior understanding could obtain,) were leading principles in the mind of the young Countess. Her own immediate servants were the slaves of her tyrannous humour ; and, but for the unbounded liberality, not to say

profusion—with which she rewarded their services, none would have remained with her. Hence she was always surrounded by grasping and interested people, who flattered her foibles in the grossest manner;—who despised—while they appeared to idolize her,—and whose only aim was to obtain those extravagant gifts which she lavished upon them.

Other ladies found their maids discontented, because their gains were not equal to those obtained by the servants of Lady Glenross. The lace veils, handsome dresses and ornaments, which she bestowed upon her women, were detailed in servants' halls, and ladies' dressing rooms; but none knew of the sleepless nights, the endless daily fatigues, the impossibility of pleasing half an hour together, which her selfish and ungoverned spirit imposed on her attendants.

For the slightest of her whims, servants and tradespeople were kept at work all night; while the smallest disappointment of her wishes or expectations were revenged on those unfortunate people, by the most vehement reproaches and the severest language. Repeatedly after she was in bed, and her weary maids had retired to theirs, she would ring her bell for any trifle she had happened to forget; and regardless of their fatigue, or the cold to which they were exposed, keep them shivering by her bed-side to re-adjust her pillow;—alter the position of her lamp;—or fetch some book from another room which she fancied she should want in the morning!

She had however, by this time obtained sufficient know-

ledge of manners to prevent her displaying the errors in her character, except in her bed-chamber and dressing-room; unless now and then when a sudden ebullition of temper, drew from her friends and visitants the remark—that the lovely young Countess, though generally so amiable and elegant, was a little passionate; but that considering her youth, and high station, it could scarcely be wondered at.

At seventeen she was presented at Court; her dress, the very standard of elegance and fashion, and blazing in un-numbered jewels.

Yet the charms of her beautiful person, the grace of her deportment, and the suavity of her manners, were universally considered as far more attractive than either. Alas! had those who saw that lovely mouth dimpled with the softest smiles, those bright eyes beaming with intelligence and joy, that fair and open brow whose diamond coronet was its least ornament,—could they have seen the tears which had been shed, the sighs which had been heaved, the sleepless and weary hours that had been wasted, ere her wayward humour could be satisfied with her dress and ornaments—how would every charm have faded on the sight!

Even the Earl and Mrs. Fitzpatrick had been worn out by Rosabelle's repeated changes of mind, the perpetual alterations she had directed, the orders and counter-orders, to Dress-makers, Jewellers, and her own women!

Scarcely when Lord Clanallan saw the fair orison which broke upon his sight as his daughter was presented to the approving smile of royalty, as every eye was bent upon her; every countenance spoke admiration; scarcely could he believe that it was the same Rosabelle—who for more than a week had thrown his household into confusion, and wearied even his affection by her caprices.

END OF THE FIRST PART.



THE
YOUNG COUNTESS.

PART THE SECOND.

Chapter I.

Womanhood, Dangerous Connections, and Fashionable Follies.

A CONSIDERABLE change now took place in the avocations of the young Countess, Mrs. Fitzpatrick continued with her rather as a companion than a governess; and though Rosabelle still continued to take lessons of some of the finishing masters, she was no longer considered as under any of the restraints of childhood. A distant relation of Lord Clanallan's, the Dowager Countess of Delmore, acted as Chaperon to the youthful Lady Glenross when she went

into public, but she now began to select her own intimates, and to be surrounded by admirers.

From dress, and all the dissipations of fashionable life, Rosabelle reserved occasionally some hours for reading, and practising the accomplishments she had acquired; for she had considerable pleasure in them herself, and too much understanding not to know, that without exercise the qualities of her mind would degenerate, and she valued too highly the influence she obtained, and the admiration she excited by her talents, not to endeavour to retain them in all their present splendour.—She corresponded with Margaret Bruce, and derived much instruction from her letters.

Amongst her admirers the only one who obtained any degree of favor was the Marquis of Deloraine, an elegant and highly educated young man, who had lately succeeded to the title by the death of his elder brother, and was himself but just of age. He had been educated for the church, till the death of his brother, about two years before, had changed his destination. To the highest accomplishments, the most perfect elegance of manners, he added the more solid attainments of literature and classical knowledge.

His deportment was so easy and unaffected, that even the most frivolous young men of the day, who pique themselves on never opening a book after they leave College except the racing calendar, dared not stigmatize him with the names of “pedant or quiz;” though he had been convicted of frequently studying the classics, was known

to be regular in his attendance on the public offices of religion, and it was understood from the report of his valet, that the bible and some volumes of sermons were amongst the books which lay on his toilette, and were most frequently referred to.

His life was unstained by any of those vices by which young men of his age too frequently degrade themselves, even often in defiance of their own feelings and taste, because they want the defence against temptation which Lord Deloraine happily enjoyed; firm principles, and *a habitual reference of themselves* on all occasions to the call of duty, and the declared will of their creator. The charities of the Marquis were diffuse and liberal, his aid was extended wherever he saw distress; but he avoided imposition by inquiring himself into the real circumstances of the objects he relieved; and often where money was useless, and power unavailing—his voice spoke comfort to the wounded spirit in exhortation, in advice, and in consolation.

This admirable young man, struck by the charms of the young Countess, was always to be seen in those circles she most frequented; he paid her for some weeks, all those silent attentions which to delicate minds are far more flattering than the loudest praises.

The Earl, pleased with a connection which offered to his expectations the most brilliant alliance for his daughter, received the Marquis's advances with so much cordiality that he soon became a frequent and welcome guest in Park-Lanc. The superior mind of Rosabelle completed

the conquest her beauty and accomplishments had began.

They painted and read together, discussed the merits of different authors, and commented with mutual enthusiasm on those passages which particularly charmed them; and there appeared to be such a general harmony in the formation of their minds, such a similarity of tastes, that every body said they were made for each other. The Marquis was of the same opinion, and the young Countess seemed very well inclined to believe it. True, there was now and then a failure,—a something wanting on her side on serious subjects if accidentally introduced, which seemed to bespeak the *companionship of mind* less perfect between them, than a transient observer might have supposed it: though she acquiesced in Deloraine's remarks, she did not demonstrate that springing readiness of agreement which spontaneously and irresistibly discovers itself when the feelings are completely accordant; but if there was nothing perfectly to satisfy, there was at present nothing to shock, and "she is so young," he thought, "so very beautiful, so much admired, she will think more seriously in time, and I shall have the delight of guiding that excellent heart, of pointing those animated feelings to the attainment of all that is most high and most ennobling."

The Marquis's proposals were soon made, and readily received, the Earl gladly consented to receive his visits, and Rosabelle neither felt nor affected objections to a connection every way so desirable.

All went on smoothly for a time, and the ensuing spring,

when the Countess would be eighteen, was already talked of for their marriage.

As gradually the intercourse between Lord Deloraine and Rosabelle became more intimate, as in frequent interviews he saw her more closely, and with less disguise, though her beauty and understanding rose every day more in his estimation; the real deficiencies of her character became more apparent; its faults glared more powerfully before him, sometimes with a sigh he half wished he had been less precipitate, that he had taken greater pains to study her character before he made his absolute proposals, and doubted whether he could be happy with one who appeared to care so much for herself, and so little for other people.

On her part, vain of her beauty, proud of her wealth, and believing in her inmost heart, that in her was concentrated every charm, and that with her no created being could compare; she felt secure that the Marquis could never break her chains, and having taken up the wild, chimerical idea that a man cannot really love a woman in whom he can see a fault; or, if she cannot guide him implicitly, whether or not his judgment approves her conduct,

Hence, she frequently attempted to tyrannise over him as she did over all others who were in any degree dependent upon her, though in a different manner, and when with gentle firmness he resisted the absolute sway she wished to exert over him; though she restrained the violence of her temper, she displayed its perverseness to the utmost, and treated him in a manner which threatened to break off the connection.

When her father remonstrated, she was angry, or laughed, as best suited her immediate humour, but under every change, she tacitly, if not verbally, defied her lover to emancipate himself from the chains her charms had wound around him.

Unfortunately at this period, Rosabelle became acquainted with a certain set of young people, who denominated themselves *Quizzers*, who delighted in exposing to ridicule, all those whose weakness of mind, or singularity of dress, or person, laid them open to their attacks. Nor did they, nor does the determined quizzer ever stop here, all that is most serious,—all that is most praise-worthy,—religion, virtue, duty,—all the properties of mind and manners, are perpetually attacked by these noxious insects, who make up in malice, what they want in wit.

Is this censure too harsh? Can it be so, when it is known that the real quizzer scruples not to commend with a grave face, and an affectation of feeling, those persons and qualities, which when absent, he most inveterately ridicules?

That he frequently leads on the unsuspecting objects of his mirth, to display themselves in various ways; praising their acquirements, admiring their accomplishments, and then when he has completely dressed persons, perhaps infinitely in real merit, beyond his narrow conception, he turns aside to some *accomplice*, (for surely those who assist in such injustice, well deserve the term,) and enjoys the ridicule of their failure. Such then, were some of the young people with whom Rosabelle now most intimately connected herself.

Could she have done so, had she been more than outwardly conformable to the precepts of the Christian Religion? Is this that spirit of charity and love which the gospel commands? Is this obeying that plain direction, "Do ye unto others, as you would they should do unto you?" That great commandment which if once generally observed, must for ever destroy every practice like those which we have thus strongly reprobated!

To conduct of this kind, Lord Deloraine most strenuously objected wherever he saw its indulgence in the societies he frequented, he strove by gravity and silence to check its progress, or where there was a possibility of doing so, by defending the object of the attack, with all the powers of brilliant wit, which he eminently possessed.

No one more acutely relished the enjoyment of real wit, and humour; no one, more thoroughly understood the nature of both; but he deprecated all severity of remark, all false ridicule, all that tended to depreciate the value of virtue and religion. Unless he was decidedly called upon to do so, Lord Deloraine did not obtrude upon others his *reasons* for acting thus, but he never was ashamed to confess that they arose from the conviction that such conduct was wholly inconsistent with the character of a Christian.

In Rosabelle, he had occasionally observed an inclination to this error, an error which when he considered its tendency to harden the heart, and lower the whole tone of the character he was often tempted to denominate as a vice. He had more than once gently endeavoured to repress it, and to im-

press her mind with his own sentiments on the subject, but sometimes by her playful wit, sometimes by angry glances she had repelled his interference, and as nothing very glaring had yet manifested itself in her conduct, Lord Deloraine was too much a lover long to dwell on what he wished to consider trifling failures, in the fair being, who was, he believed only less than perfect.

There was, amongst the intimate visitors in Park-lane, a relation of Lord Clanallan's, Lady Mary Graham, she was a woman of about forty, perhaps a little more, she had a small income, but in consequence of her high birth and connection she was every where received in the best society.

She lodged in a fashionable street, an old aunt of her Ladyships', who spoke the broadest Scotch, and dressed in the most antique manner, gave a sanction to Lady Mary, who would have thought herself too young to reside without a chaperon,

Lady Mary was by no means handsome, high cheek bones, small grey eyes, and tresses which English people called red, but which she denominated, the true yellow, or golden hair of Queen Elizabeth's age; a tall, large-boned muscular person, and a complexion rather white, than fair, formed her tout ensemble.

She had many good qualities, she was friendly, charitable and warm-hearted, had a large portion of cheerful good-humour, and was by no means deficient in natural good

sense ; her manners were abrupt and her expressions sometimes inelegant and almost coarse ; but her worst fault was an overweening vanity, which led her to consider her defects as beauties, and to imitate every whimsical fashion which arose either in dress or furniture, as far as her scanty means and shabby materials would permit.

She had the folly of believing herself still young, and at parties, instead of associating with respectable persons of her own age, she often intruded upon the youthful circle to join the festive dance or make one in the sportive conversation, where, with all the affectation of girlish manners, she would endeavour to make others forget, she was no longer so young as she appeared to think herself ; these foibles laid her open to a great deal of ridicule, and were, indeed, in themselves extremely ridiculous.

Had pointed wit, and undisguised satire from persons of her own age, been the weapons employed to make her feel and abandon her follies, all would have been fair ; but when ridicule came in the guise of friendship, and those much younger, lost the respect they owed to her good qualities in impertinent mockery, no excuse could be made for such a breach of the laws of society.

Amongst those who most diverted themselves with the absurdities of Lady Mary Graham, was her young cousin, the Countess of Glenross, and the applause which her frolics always commanded from her young companions, emboldened her to pursue them beyond what could be tolerated in one

so much younger, and a near relation of the party thus singled out to be the butt of her sarcastic wit.

Often Lord Deloraine showed his dislike to such conduct, often by mild gravity, endeavoured to repress the insidious glance, with which his fair mistress pointed the ridicule of her circle against the unconscious Lady Mary Graham.

Chapter II.

Extravagance, the Ottoman, absurd Imitation.

ROSABELLE had lately caused her own apartments to be newly furnished in the most splendid manner. Marble figures, supporting vases of flowers, adorned the anti-room, while the boudoir was decorated with appropriate statues from the antique holding gold censers which exhaled the richest perfumes. The curtains, ottomans and chairs, were made of fine pale blue velvet with fringes and tassels of gold; marble tables, inlaid cabinets, and every article which luxury and fashion could furnish were profusely scattered through this superb suite of apartments. So great indeed was the expense incurred, that the Earl himself looked grave, as his eye fell on the sum total of the upholsterer's bill, and he ventured half to articulate a wish that his daughter would be a little less extravagant; but with an air almost disdainful she told him, that if he wished, she would give him her bond for

the amount payable, when she should be of age, out of her own estates, and the sighing Earl turned away grieved at that lofty, and extravagant spirit he had but too much encouraged.

As the eyes of Lord Deloraine glanced over these splendid novelties, his heart owned a wish, that however amply his own fortune and that of the young Countess might afford such enormous expenses, her heart and fancy could have been contented with less. Such unlimited expenditure he thought unjustifiable; it showed a radical error in the character, a selfishness of mind to lavish so much merely for the purpose of self-gratification; for, at her age, and without a separate establishment of her own, Rosabelle was not called upon to support by such superb embellishments her rank and consequence. "Oh that her tastes were more simple," he exclaimed, "how, but just emerging from childhood, has she acquired so keen a relish for magnificence! had she expended double the sum these decorations have cost, in fine pictures, in books, in any thing connected with mind, above all, had it been yielded even in part to the claims of gratitude and friendship, to the demand of generosity or charity, gladly, delightedly, should I have hailed her liberal spirit! But so much!—But *all* bestowed upon herself!—Alas! it betokens a soul too much absorbed in self-indulgence, too little accustomed to the wholesome checks of self-control."

There was one absurd piece of furniture in the boudoir to which the Marquis particularly objected. It was a very large ottoman, extended in the middle of the room, nearly

as large as a bed, of downy softness, and covered with the same rich blue velvet ornamented with gold of which the other seats were composed, with pillows and cushions of various shapes and sizes to match. Here, herself and her young companions were to sit or rather lounge in graceful or ungraceful attitudes, as their different forms and actions might permit. Here, the fair Rosabelle, sometimes half the day, reclined in luxurious ease, while at her side or feet, the idle, the dissipated, and the flattering, leaned or sat as best suited their fancy.

There was something in all this, however sanctioned by a few fantastic leaders of the ton, which struck the Marquis, as highly displeasing and inconsistent with that purity of feeling and dignity of demeanor he wished to see in every Englishwoman. "Oh, banish," he cried, "to other climates, all that thus enervates both the body and the mind!" Does it suit with the blushing modesty of youth,—does it agree with the chaste dignity of the female character, thus to display the figure, in attitudes, indecorous at least, if not indelicate?—My Rosabelle, this frivolous, this inconsistent indulgence is unworthy of you." A faint blush tinged the cheek of Rosabelle as he spoke, her natural candor led her to confess that his remarks were just; but pride and obstinate self-will repressed the salutary conviction, and she persisted in what she herself thought wrong, merely because she would convince him that she would not be controlled.

Nor was this the only mischief which originated from this profusion of splendor; Lady Mary Graham, enchanted with the elegance of the scene, was half envious of its

magnificence ; she sighed, as she reflected how impossible it was for her in her small apartments, and with so limited an income, even to imitate its grandeur, she ruminated and sighed again, for she saw not how even by still more stinting her miserable table, or even by lessening the few comforts of her poor bed-chamber, she could even attempt any thing that might approach to the style she so much admired. At length, in a half whisper, she communicated to Rosabelle some of her perplexities, and acknowledged how ardently she desired to imitate, though she knew it must be humbly, what she so extremely approved. “ My dear Countess,” she said, “ could I not arrange my apartments, at least, a little more fashionably ? I am really weary of seeing the old tables and chairs standing as if they were glued to the wall, and if one is moved, or a book left upon the table, my poor dear Aunt, Lady Alice, is perfectly miserable ! I really do think, however, that by changing away some of the old lumber and adding a little to the sum, I may make some alterations very much for the better.” “ No doubt of it ;” said the Countess, while a half suppressed smile and sly glance marked her sense of the absurdity, “ what my dear Lady Mary cannot taste like yours effect ?” “ Oh, you are really too good ;” said the flattered Lady Mary, “ and if you, dear Cousin, would give me the benefit of your advice, I really think I should do wonders.”

The Countess readily acquiesced ; and it was settled that she should go next day to Lady Mary’s lodgings to assist in the proposed alterations. Lady Mary then took her leave, eager to make such arrangements as might assist her in executing her new plans. As soon

as she was gone the Countess threw herself back, and indulged in a long fit of laughter, disregarding the grave looks of the Marquis, who was the only person present at this conversation.

“ Oh, what diversion I shall have ;” she at length exclaimed, “ I long for to-morrow, trust me, I will make her superlatively ridiculous before I leave her.” “ Can it be of your near connection, your Father’s relation, a woman (whatever her foibles) with many good qualities, and of whom you profess yourself the friend, that you speak thus, Lady Glenross ?” said the Marquis, gravely, “ will you indeed lead her into the commission of follies you might so easily have checked ?—Do you think it consistent with common good-nature, much less with Christian charity.”—“ Oh pray, pray, my good Marquis,” interrupted Rosabelle, “ no prosing, no preaching !—Upon my word, they spoiled an excellent future Bishop when they made you a Marquis !—Bless me, how I should have liked to see you in lawn sleeves and a fine cauliflower wig, supplying the place of these bright auburn locks !—It’s very provoking, by the by, that they will curl so, if they would but lie strait you might at least set up for a methodist preacher, or a quaker, or one of the auld Scotch calvinist ministers !—I assure you, I recollect some very pretty retired *Manses*, as we call the parsonage houses in Scotland, where I dare say you would be much happier than in parading up and down Bond Street, or lounging over my chair at the Opera.” “ I might, indeed, be better employed ;” said the Marquis, with a sigh. “ What better employed than in attending on *me* ? Oh, impossible !—Besides,”

she added, sportively touching, with the print of her finger, one of the fine auburn curls to which she had alluded. "I tell you these curls would be quite inconsistent with Scotch sanctity."

Pained by her levity, the Marquis sighed and was silent. She saw that she had gone rather too far, she therefore gradually changed her manner, and throwing aside the flippancy which annoyed and grieved him, she assumed the gentle dignity which in her better moments sat so happily upon her. She consulted him on some new publications, that had been recommended to her, readily promised to read those he approved, and rejected all to which he showed the smallest objection, she discovered such deference to his judgment, and such admirable clearness in her own, that he found it almost impossible to remember she could sometimes be so wrong. She afterwards played and sung to him several of his favourite airs, and succeeded in erasing from his mind the unfavourable impressions her former conduct had occasioned.

When he recalled the past the Marquis doubted not, that on reflection, Rosabelle would abandon the intention of encouraging Lady Mary Graham in the ridiculous design of new modelling her apartments in a miserable imitation of those, where the most lavish expenditure had introduced every possible article of expense and luxury.

But he was yet to learn the persevering spirit of the young Countess, yet to learn the stubbornness of her

will, and that his opposition had rather inflamed than lessened her determination to please herself. When the Marquis therefore the next morning, at his usual hour, proceeded to Park Lane, he found from Mrs. Fitzpatrick that the young Countess, accompanied by one of her gay friends, Mrs. Osborne, had left home at rather an early hour. Mrs. Fitzpatrick appeared to understand that the object of this excursion was merely to enjoy a very fine morning, by a drive to Kensington, and a visit to a nursery-man's, there to choose some plants; the Marquis, therefore, flattered himself, that Rosabelle's better judgment had induced her to relinquish the plan he had so much deprecated.

He augured however, not much good from the association of Miss Osborne in Rosabelle's excursion, for he knew her to be one of those flippant, frivolous girls, whose intimacy with Lady Glenross had already tintured her naturally ardent and feeling character with that cold worldly spirit which inevitably follows the indulgences of an indiscriminate love of ridicule. To such persons as Miss Osborne, all that exalts human nature, all that purifies the heart, generosity, self-denial, charity, religion, every tender affection, every ennobling pursuit, are comprehended under one sweeping term of contempt; romantic, or methodistical are the words by which they distinguish all that passes the comprehension of their little minds, as such, a proper mark for the arrows of false wit. Often those who possess souls elevated by nature and formed for the brightest deeds of virtue, shrink appalled from the galling weapons, which like "firebrands

flung in sport by the hand of a fool," occasion an incalculable spread of mischief and destruction.

Under this baneful influence (which falls like a corroding blight on the fairest blossoms) the lofty and noble spirit of Rosabelle began to droop. Even in the wildest and most impetuous moments of passion, she had been frequently warmed by a glow of generous feeling, a touch of soft humanity which had half redeemed her failings; but now she began to check these better impulses, to control these kindly emotions, which her new associates perpetually ridiculed, and seemed likely to add to her the errors which had sprung from an overindulged infancy, the more odious and irreparable faults of character which arise from the evil counsellors of youth.

The Marquis still lingered and waited Rosabelle's return, he turned over some of her books, and saw those passages marked, which they had read and admired together; on her piano, lay his favourite songs, and on her drawing table, an admirable though unfinished likeness of himself. Touched, flattered, enchanted, scarcely could he believe his Rosabelle had a fault; but, alas! in turning over the leaves of her *porte-feuille*, he found half her acquaintance presented to his view in ludicrous caricatures, even those whose age and honourable characters ought to have ensured her respect, were not exempt; and there was a levity, a hardness of character displayed in many of the allusive representations, that showed a mind rapidly depreciating and assuming the low, inferior, contemptible cast of thought, of those with whom

she had of late but too much associated. "*Oh, what a noble mind is here o'er thrown!*" he mentally exclaimed, is there no mode of rescuing this lovely creature from the thralldom which ensnares her?" Must she sink "em-meshed, benetted" under the influence of beings so much beneath her. The natural character of her mind is generous, kind and noble! How can she give way to foibles so unworthy, so disgraceful? There must be a radical fault somewhere,—Alas, is it not a deficiency in the genuine spirit of Christianity? That once infused into her heart, all that is "low" would be "raised" all that is "dark, illumined!"

Absorbed in meditation, the Marquis remained expecting the return of Rosabelle, at length she came, and in her train, several of the wild and thoughtless set from which he so much wished to withdraw her, whom she had collected in her progress. The two Lady Dewnils, attended by Captain Selby, a young guardsman, the Miss Osbornes and their brother, a lounging young man of fashion, one of those who in the change which time makes even in the application of words, would have been designated as a macaroni, a fop, a coxcomb, and in these latter days, a dandy; one of that tribe which piques itself in a display of *science* in the tying of a cravat, or the adjustment of its hair, in wearing stays, and other frivolities, beneath the attention of even the most frivolous woman!—Are such beings worthy of the name of Englishmen; can some of them be the descendants of the heroes of Cressey and Poitiers? Can they be the compatriots of those, who on the fields of Vittoria, Salamanca, and Waterloo, have more than equalled the re-

noun of their forefathers? Could our great Edwards and Henries rise, and recalling the bands they commanded, see them in their soiled array as our great, our immortal Poet describes them,* how could they be induced to believe that amongst the contemporaries of Graham and Wellington, the rivals of their own glory, such frivolous, such effeminate beings could be found?—yet such there are!—

The gay laugh of Rosabelle was heard on the staircase, it was a laugh in its natural tone so charming, so exhilarating, that all who heard were tempted to join in it. Deloraine started at the sound, and rose to receive the Countess; radiant in smiles and beauty, her cheek glowing with the freshest colour, her lip dimpled by mirth and joy; she entered, and gaily shaking hands with him, spoke to him in tones of hilarity and affection. “Charming creature,” he mentally exclaimed, “can that sweet countenance veil any error that is more than venial? Oh,

* “The poor condemned English
Like sacrifices by their watchful fires,
Sit patiently, and inly ruminate
The next day’s march.”

“Our gayness and our guilt are all besmirched
With rainy marching in the painful field;
There’s not a piece of feather in our host,
But by the mass our hearts are in the trim,
And my poor soldiers tell me, yet ere night
They’ll be in fresher robes, for they will pluck
The gay new coats o’er the French soldier’s heads.”

SHAKSPEARE’S *Henry 5th.*

no, her's are the mere wanderings of a lively imagination; she doubtless has relinquished the cruel project of exposing her relation to needless ridicule,"

But, alas, how was every grace shrouded,—how did every charm fade away, when he heard her with a fresh burst of laughter, in which she was joined by Harriet Osborne, exclaim delightedly to the rest of the set, how highly they had been amused. "Oh," she cried, "there never was such a scene as we have had! I am afraid I cannot give you the slightest idea of its effect." "Pray, pray, tell us," said Lady Anne Dewnill in an affected tone, "next to being present at the scene, dear Countess, your animated description will be the highest amusement." "Oh Lady Glenross's wit and vivacity, cannot fail to render every thing delightful," said Mr. Osborne, "but when displayed on such a topic, how rich would be the gratification;" "To what do you allude," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "where have you been to meet with such extraordinary entertainment, I thought you were going to Kensington to buy plants." "Oh, no," said Rosabelle, "we have deferred that for a few days, I thought ma'am you had understood so." "Certainly I did not," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, gravely, "and if you have been paying visits, Lady Glenross, you ought to have taken me with you, or requested Lady Delmore to chaperon you." "Dear Mrs. Fitzpatrick," said Miss Osborne, "we have been only to Lady Mary Graham's, and we thought"—"Oh, if you have only been there," answered Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "as a near relation of Lady Glenross's, there could be no objection, but she is too young Miss Osborne to visit generally by herself, and I am sure Lord

Clanallan would by no means approve of her going out without letting me know her intentions." "Oh, but my dear Mrs. Fitzpatrick," said Miss Osborne, "I am somewhat older, and, I am sure, you will allow that I am a most grave and discreet character, and then we had Old Donald to drive, and Murray behind the carriage, and of course were abundantly guarded." "From danger, doubtless," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick," but not from remark, and I shall be obliged to the Countess not to repeat these morning excursions without consulting her Father, or securing the sanction of Lady Delmore."

Rosabelle frowned, and cast an angry glance on Mrs. Fitzpatrick. Deloraine started! He had never seen such a look from eyes which he thought formed only to express good humour, kindness, and affection. Beneath that glance the lively smiles, the winning dimples, which had so greatly charmed him, withered away,

It was however, momentary, for some whispered words from Mr. Osborne, either of flattery to herself, or ridicule of Mrs. Fitzpatrick's caution, recalled the smiles and gaiety of Rosabelle, and after a little more soothing and flattery, from the giddy circle, she was gradually led into an animated recital of the adventures of the morning. "I promised Lady Mary," she said, "to call on her to-day, to see what could be done to transform her tables and chairs into book-stands and chiffoniers, ottomans and chaises longues, and her old fashioned harpsichord with one string and a half, into a modern grand piano.—I thought Marquis" she added, turning with a bewitching smile to Lord Deloraine, who with folded arms and a grave

countenance, stood gazing upon her; "I thought of those lines which you read to me the other day, and at my request wrote into my Album, as the book they were in, you told me, was not exactly calculated for my inspection." She then with inimitable grace, elegance and propriety repeated the following lines from Dryden's *Philemon and Baucis*.

" Their little cot scarce large enough for two,
Seems from the ground increased, in height and bulk to grow
A stately temple shoots within the skies,
The crotches of their cot in columns rise,
The pavement polished marble they behold
The gates with sculpture graced, the spires and tiles with gold."

" Charming, admirable, how clever, how well applied," exclaimed the flattering throng, while Deloraine met her appealing eyes with a half smile, followed by a sigh as he thought how sadly she wasted powers of mind and memory, that might have placed her high in the estimation of persons, far, far superior to the frivolous set by which she was surrounded. " Well," she continued blushing at the reiterated applause, " but as unluckily Lady Mary had not made a friend of either Jupiter or Mercury, she had been obliged to summon in their stead an inferior intelligencer, whom she called a *Broker*, by her account, in some respect, not wholly unlike Mercury himself, who was, I believe, the patron of cheats, amongst the chief of whom she reckoned this unlucky Broker. Well, when we arrived, for I could not refuse a share in the diversion to Harriet, the agents of this powerful being, commonly called Porters, had just carried off the old fashioned tables and chairs, some worm-eaten bookshelves, &c. &c. " For all which," said poor Lady Mary,

with a repining countenance, "he has given me such a trifle that I am afraid my rooms must remain half unfurnished, however dear Countess, we will go out and see how far this paltry sum, with what I can spare besides, will go in new furniture." "I was afraid of affronting her," added Rosabelle, "or I would have offered my aid; and, besides—I thought,—I wanted to see how ridiculous she would make herself" Deloraine started and sighed,— "Oh, what a sentiment! Can this be Rosabelle!" he said to himself. Rosabelle herself, blushed and cast down her eyes, and seemed ashamed of what she had said, but while he joyfully hailed that blush as the pledge of better thoughts, it was chased by the applause of her circle, who exclaimed, "Oh certainly, quite right, it would have been a thousand pities to spoil so fine a scene!"

"Oh," said Miss Osborne, "but Lady Glenross did not act as she says, for when she saw Lady Mary lamenting over ornamental furniture and china, which she could not afford to purchase, our sweet Countess ordered several articles of considerable expense, and sent them to Lady Mary's lodgings." "Well, that was so good, so like Lady Glenross, so generous! Every body knows her noble spirit," said the admiring circle, changing the mode of their applause, so as best to suit the object of it. "Lady Glenross would have been far better employed and more truly generous," said Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "had she dissuaded Lady Mary from this absurd scheme, and supplied her, if she saw it requisite, with articles of real comfort, without blazoning abroad her own munificence." "Oh, most true," involuntarily, but in a low voice, exclaimed the Marquis. "Charming!

How fortunate your Lordship and Mrs. Fitzpatrick should so happily agree!" replied Rosabelle with an indignant glance at both; and then with renewed vivacity turning to the smiling Mr. Osborne, she said, "Don't you think I am very happy in such excellent advisers?" "I think," said the bowing flatterer, "Lady Glenross requires no adviser but her own superior mind," "True, sir," said Lord Deloraine, with an air of displeasure mingled with contempt, "if she were left entirely to its natural dictates, uninfluenced by example and counsel, which check the genuine impulses of a heart and understanding that seldom would mislead her." "Well, well," said Rosabelle eagerly, and half alarmed at the gathering cloud on the brow of Deloraine, as he noticed the affected sneer of Mr. Osborne, "leave me and my faults to correct themselves. and let me finish my *historiette*, it will never be ended if I am so frequently interrupted." "Pardon me, Lady Glenross," said the Marquis, "I, at least, shall interrupt it no more;" and throwing himself on a seat by the window; he seemed to be gazing on the passing carriages, while his heart was oppressd by the most painful feelings. He hesitated, indeed, whether he should not quit the room, but he feared if he did so, that the giddy train by which Rosabelle was surrounded, might make a story of it, for the amusement of the next circle they might enter, well knowing that the determined quizzer, who is also generally a gossip by profession, spares neither friend nor foe in the eager search for something new.

From a sad reverie into which he was sinking, he was roused by hearing Miss Osborne say, "Oh, but you have forgotten the ottoman!" "The ottoman!" repeated Rosabelle, "Oh, so I had!—Oh, that was delicious!—After

we returned to Lady Mary's apartments, and all the new purchases were landed, we made her set them in all sorts of confusion about her drawing room, the great old fashioned harpsichord which she flatters herself, by the aid of a new cover, will pass for a grand piano forte, is placed across the room and half fills it; the new chairs, book tables, and sofa, are standing in such a maze that it is hardly possible to pass between them.

Piles of old half worn books are scattered about in what she fancies an elegant disorder; and some pieces of china are threatened with destruction from the elbow of every one who enters the apartment; the ridiculous mixture of new and old, the affectation of cramming into a room, just fourteen feet square, all kinds of incongruous associations are in themselves abundantly ridiculous; but all must yield to the ottoman of which I take the sole merit to myself." "Oh, it was all your own, you dear mischievous creature, no one else could have done it half so cleverly." "You must understand," said Rosabelle, "that of all my furniture, Lady Mary most envies me, is that ottoman;" pointing to the one Lord Deloraine so much disliked, and on which the two Lady Dewnils were lounging in attitudes which displayed their slender ancles rather more than old fashioned people would have thought decorous; and how to manage it, she could not tell, for the expense she owned was an insuperable objection, guess how we contrived to obviate it?—No; I see you cannot, well then, we persuaded her to bring in an actual feather-bed, and put down in the midst of all the confused heaps of furniture she had before collected, and we left her busily

engaged in cutting out a cover from an old faded crimson velvet train, which her grand-mother, the Duchess of Dunsinane had worn at the coronation of Queen Caroline ! The gold fringe and tassels with which it was trimmed she thought would do very well to ornament this superb ottoman, and nothing could exceed the delight with which she anticipated this *chef d'œuvre* of taste and industry."

Reiterated bursts of laughter hailed this ludicrous account which were increased by Miss Osborne's remarking, that the Countess had omitted to describe the dismay of poor Lady Alice, of whom they had caught a glimpse, sitting in a room no bigger than a closet, in a morning dishabille not too clean, and lamenting to the servant the deprivation she should experience of an expected "*seep's hed an haggis*," which Lady Mary would not afford for dinner, now she had been at sic a muckle expense for new gear for the drawing-room." But the relish with which this new trait was at first received seemed to lose its keenness, when it was observed that the spirits of Lady Glenross appeared to be exhausted, who complained of a head ache from the exertions of the morning.

A well known French author, says, "On sait qu'un mal de tete pour une jolie femme est une maniere civile de congedier les impertuns." And it seemed to be so considered with the circle which filled the boudoir of the young Countess, who took their leaves after a few whispered sentences between her, the Miss Osbornes and the Lady Dewnills, of which the words "to-morrow, at two, we will not fail," were alone audible. Deloraine, who had lingered, hoping the giddy set would depart, now

saw, with some degree of satisfaction, that languor, and he trusted concern for what had passed had taken possession of Rosabelle; Mrs. Fitzpatrick retired to dress, but the young Countess still leaned back on the sofa where she sat, and Deloraine hoped she only waited for an opening to acknowledge herself sorry for the follies of the morning. "How unworthy of a mind like yours my Rosabelle," he said, seating himself beside her, "are the frivolity and nonsense of the idle set which has just left you!"

"You are really too obliging my Lord," she answered in a sarcastic tone, "your opinion of my friends is particularly flattering!" "Can they be your friends who thus mislead you!" he replied with some warmth, "Oh, prostitute not thus, the sacred names!—Do you think if you were suddenly reduced from the elevated station you now hold, should sickness impair your beauty and destroy your vivacity; do you think there is one of them that would not rejoice in the downfall of one, whom they envy, while they flatter! Do you not believe, that if sorrow or pain should cloud the lustre of that brilliant lot which draws them round you, these fluttering insects would at once forsake you? Do you not believe, that Lady Mary Graham, that very Lady Mary, whom you have so cruelly exposed to ridicule, whose folly you have inflamed, with whose weakness you have sported, would be more likely, limited as are her powers, to cheer your solitary hours with kindness and attention than either of the Lady Dewnil's or the Miss Osborne's?" "Indeed, I have never thought about it," she answered in a peevish tone, "I think there is not

much chance of my wanting either of them." "Uncertain is the lot of humanity," said Deloraine, "think me not too serious, dearest Rosabelle, if I call to your recollection the numerous examples, which history, which still more forcibly Scripture, our unerring guide, relates, of persons great as the utmost stretch of human power could make them, suddenly cast down." "How you talk, Lord Deloraine," interrupted Rosabelle, with increasing peevishness, "I never hear any body else speak of such things, it is quite enough if we think of them in church, and at proper times." "Are not the confidential hours of those who are to spend their lives together," answered Deloraine, seriously, "a proper time, Rosabelle, to speak on subjects of such high, such vital importance? I, as little as you, would introduce serious topics in mixed or general society, but between those whose interests are to be blended in this world, whose views, I trust, are extended to the next, can such conversation ever be unseasonable? Oh, Rosabelle, how has my heart been torn, my dependence on your noble character been shaken by the transactions of this morning! May I not hope that this has only been a momentary levity, that your heart, your feelings, will prevent you from ever joining again in a system of mockery so indefensible. Will you not, Rosabelle, endeavor to restore Lady Mary to that sober state of mind from which you have assisted to lure her? Persuade her, I entreat you, to relinquish her new arrangements as inconsistent and absurd."

"Indeed I shall do no such thing," said the perverse Rosabelle, "I am certain that no one else would take such a trifle so seriously! Indeed, my Lord, you are too

grave and too good for me, if I am forbidden the common diversion of my age, if I am expected to do penance for every deviation from what your lordship thinks *precisely correct*, I may as well retire for life into some convent, or shut myself up in the old castle in Scotland!" "Oh, Rosabelle, is this just, is it generous!" said the grieved Deloraine, "do I wish to abridge you of the diversions calculated for your sex and age? you know I do not! But in schemes so wild, so frivolous, so unworthy of your taste and feelings, why will you waste your hours and that superior understanding bestowed on you to a far different end! Reflect,—Consider."

"I am tired of those words, Lord Deloraine," said Rosabelle, with assumed coldness; "I dare say, I shall have time enough for reflection and consideration hereafter. Pray leave me now. It is time for me to dress for dinner. Indeed so very dissimilar appear to be our views and opinions, that perhaps it would be better, were we to meet henceforth, only as friends, indeed, as common acquaintances, for why should you bestow even your friendship on one you seem to think so frivolous, if not so wicked." "What I have thought of you, Lady Glenross," answered Deloraine, with some indignation, "you well know! What I am hereafter to think, depends upon yourself! But drive me not from you, Rosabelle," he added in softer tones, "unless you are quite, quite sure, that you will derive more happiness from the society of those heartless and trifling beings, from whom I willingly would rescue you, in the prosecution of idle and mischievous schemes to

which they will make your wealth, your power, and your wit, subservient, than from the confidence of real affection, the improvement of your mind, the enlargement of your views! From all that is best worth having in this world, all that leads to happiness in the next! Farewell, Rosabelle, farewell! A short time will decide between us! For, although in all sincerity and truth, I dedicated my heart to the Rosabelle I so lately believed you, though to quit you would wring that heart with a pang unutterable; I must not, cannot, will not, trust the whole felicity of my future life to Rosabelle surrounded by fops and fools, guided by their counsels, influenced by their example, wasting in frivolity, her time, her generous feelings, and every high endowment of her soul!"

Chapter III.

The Lace Girl, and the Opera.

ASTONISHED, shocked, confounded, Rosabelle gazed, half believing it a dream—on the departing form of Deloraine. She had thought him so firmly her own, that it was impossible for him to entertain an idea of leaving her!—For a moment she felt convinced of her own folly, and the impropriety of her conduct. She retraced with a sensation almost amounting to shame, the follies of which she had been guilty. The encouragement she had given to the forwardness of Mr. Osborne, a being in every respect so unworthy of being opposed to Lord Deloraine; her cruel mocking of Lady Mary Graham, her better judgment now thought indefensible; but her proud spirit rose against the conviction, at least determined her not to confess it. “He threatens me,” she cried, “he dares to presume that I should regret his leaving me!—Is there another man on earth who would thus lecture the woman

he professes to love ! One who like me possesses, wealth, rank, accomplishments ; nay, let me add, beauty, which if others do not most grossly flatter, might command the homage of the world ! Does he think I fear him ? Shall I give him the triumph of supposing that I cannot bear the idea of his desertion.—No, let him go,” she added, tears of passion falling from her eyes, “ his superiors might be proud of the encouragement I have given him !—His superiors ! ” repeated her conscious heart, “ Oh where are Deloraine’s superiors to be found !—No matter, I must not, will not yield !—To be conquered now, is to be a slave for ever !—To sacrifice my own tastes, my own inclinations, the friends I love, to his caprice !—No, I will not do it.

In vain did her heart whisper, that the tastes, the inclinations Deloraine condemned were not in truth congenial to her real wishes, that the friends she boasted to love were not the spontaneous choice of her heart, and still less were they approved by her reason ; fortifying herself against its murmurs by a spirit yet unconquered, a will yet unsubdued, she stifled every suggestion of her conscience, and whispering to herself, “ To-morrow—oh, to-morrow !—all will then be over ;—Why did I promise ! ”

She flew to her dressing-room in a temper of mind that was sufficiently evident to make her servants dread her approach. Here a new trial awaited her, a trial which to one so unused to contradiction or disappointment, coming as it did, when her mind was already in a state of irritation, was more than she could with even tolerable patience endure.

She had some time before been shown some beautiful lace by one of her attendants, who told her it was the work of a poor girl who made it herself; having been furnished with several new and elegant patterns by her sister, who lived in a French family at Paris.

Benson, Lady Glenross's head woman, told her Lady that it would be an act of kindness and charity to employ the poor girl; and that more-over her Ladyship might depend on having lace of patterns which could not be matched in London, as her sister's mistress had invented them herself.

It would not be doing justice to the character of Rosabelle to deny that the first motive would have been sufficient to induce her to employ this poor girl, but the latter assurance made her eager to receive the fruits of her labors. She had ordered therefore a rich trimming of lace to be made in a peculiar form, and worn on a new dress which had been sent home for this evening. She was going first to the Opera, and afterwards to a select supper at the Duchess of Dunbayne's. At the Opera she expected to meet her principal associates and the Lady Dewnils Deloraine himself, and a few persons of the first rank and fashion, to whom she wished to appear in a superior style of elegance;—she had hinted to the Lady Dewnils that she intended to wear a new dress in a singular taste on this occasion. The dress itself composed of rich white satin, lay ready to be trimmed as soon as the lace draperies should arrive, and she expected to find it completely finished when she should enter her dressing-room; there however, it still lay, in the same state as when she had gone out

in the morning ; her eyes flashed indignantly, and her brow was clouded as Benson fearfully approached her, " What ! this dress not trimmed yet ! " she exclaimed, " when I ought to be dressed for dinner ! What is the meaning of this intolerable negligence ! " " The lace my Lady," said Benson fearfully, " we have been waiting for the lace, it is not come ! " " Then why have you not sent to that stupid girl ? I must have it !—I will not be disappointed—Send immediately, and tell her to finish it directly."

" The lace girl my Lady ! " said Kitty, another of the Countess's maids, entering the room eagerly, " she is this moment come ! " " Oh very well," said Rosabelle, her countenance clearing up, " send her in—you Kitty put on the lace, while Benson arranges my hair ;—send in the girl quickly—give me my purse !—I don't know whether I have money enough in it to pay her, but there is plenty in the drawer of that cabinet—I will pay her immediately, and make her a handsome present over, if I like the lace."

" Your Ladyship is so generous, so considerate ! " said Benson, " no wonder every body is eager to serve you ;—and then your Ladyship will look so beautiful in your new dress, and then the Lady Dewnils and every body will be wanting to have such lace ! " " I shall make a point," said Rosabelle, " that this girl shall not make any lace of the same pattern for any one ; if she does I will never employ her again."

During this conversation Kitty was gone to desire Nancy

Meadows, the lace-maker, to come to her Lady; assuring her as she went tremblingly forward, that she need be afraid of nothing; for that the Countess was delighted she was come, and had her purse in her hand to pay her directly. "My Lady," she added, "is none of those ladies that orders things and forgets to pay for them."

"Oh but——" hesitated the poor girl, apparently much agitated, "she will not—I am afraid—pray Miss Kitty do not take me to my Lady!—Pray tell her——" "Nonsense, foolish girl," answered Kitty, pulling her along, "tell her yourself; my Lady I know is going to make you a handsome present over and above the price of the lace; would you lose that, simpleton, by not going yourself?"

Those words brought them to the door of the dressing-room, where Lady Glenross was seated before a magnificent toilette with Benson behind her, just beginning to arrange her hair; and Patty, a third attendant, holding a superb tiara of gems which was to be placed upon it. The poor girl stood trembling and courtesying at the door. "Come in child, come in," said the impatient Rosabelle, and let me see the lace, I am dying to see it!—Kitty bring it to me directly, I see she has it in her hand."

"Give it me silly girl," whispered Kitty, snatching a small parcel from her hand, and approaching her lady, "Oh it is beautiful!—It is superb!" cried Rosabelle, as she unfolded the lace and threw it across her hand, "I

am delighted with it!—Good girl!—You have surpassed my expectations. Pay her for it quickly Benson, and give her five guineas as a present because she has done it so well!—But how is this!” she exclaimed, as the lace unfolded—“ Here are only two deep falls for the sleeves instead of four, and not more than seven yards of the broad lace for trimming the draperies!—What is the reason of this child?—What have you done with the rest of the lace?—Have you left it behind?—Why don’t you speak?” she added in an angry tone, “ Why don’t you speak to my Lady,” said Benson to the trembling girl;—“ Why Nancy, child, why don’t you tell my Lady why you did not bring the lace!”

“ Indeed, indeed, my Lady,” said the poor girl in faltering accents, “ it is not my fault!—I should have finished it two days ago, but my poor mother has been very ill, dangerously ill; I have been obliged to attend her: and though I worked every moment I could, it was impossible to finish it!—And my Lady, her illness obliged me to break into a little sum I had saved on purpose to buy thread for this suit of lace, and I could not get any one to trust me for more than a guinea’s worth; for which I am now in debt.”

“ Why did you not come to me then,” said Rosabelle, “ I would have given you money to get thread, and sent some one to nurse your mother, rather than have been disappointed of my lace!” “ I did come last week my Lady,” answered Nancy, “ but the footman said your Ladyship was not at home, and he would tell Mrs. Benson.” “ He never told me a word of the matter,” said

son, "Nor me, I am sure," said Kitty. "Oh it's all a pretence!—all nonsense," cried the angry Rosabelle, "I dare say she has been making lace for somebody else.—I do not know what folly induced me to employ her!—There take your lace child, take it," she repeated, throwing it from her angrily, "I will have nothing to do with it, you may sell it if you please, to those—to whom I doubt not—you have sold the remainder!—I would not give a shilling for the whole suit now!"

The trembling girl, thunderstruck with this determination, again assured her Ladyship that the lace now produced was the only piece she had made since she received her orders:—in vain she assayed to move her pity, in vain she would have stated what must be her ruin in having lace of so much expense, and so particular in its design, returned upon her hands, without having even the means of paying the debt she had incurred for thread; Rosabelle refused to hear her, and imperiously commanded her to quit the room immediately, and carry her lace with her. The unfortunate girl obeyed; and Rosabelle out of humour with her, with herself, and with all the occurrences of the morning, was forced with much repining, out of twenty dresses nearly new,—all of which she declared to be odious, to select the most tolerable; arrayed in which—after venting her displeasure on her attendants in a hundred different ways, she descended as the last dinner-bell rung, to the saloon.

In the anti-room she was met by old Sinclair; who, without being required to do any thing more than her inclination prompted, still continued in the family—"Pray

my dear young lady, let me speak one word to you," she said; "Don't you see Sinclair," answered Rosabelle impatiently, "that the dinner is placed on the table?—Why could you not have come to my dressing-room?" "Because Madam, it is but this instant I have learned the circumstance which makes me take the liberty of applying to you. The poor lace girl—Stop one moment my dear Lady," she added, catching the robe of Rosabelle, who, at this mention of the lace girl was rapidly and angrily advancing, "only hear me one word, the poor girl is in such distress, she says she is ruined,—that she has not a shilling in the world,—that her poor mother's furniture must be sold to pay the guinea she owes for thread!—Pray my dear Lady forgive her having disappointed you, she promises to work day and night to complete the order, and says it can be finished in less than a fortnight."

"A fortnight!" answered Rosabelle, "I would not give a shilling for it then, nor at all, since I could not have it to-day, that I had set my heart upon it!—I will hear no more about her, she has vexed and tormented me enough, and every thing, I think, has conspired to-day to annoy me." "May I tell her to come to-morrow," said Sinclair earnestly, "will your Ladyship see her then?" "I tell you Sinclair," answered Rosabelle, with increasing irritation, "I will have nothing to do with her, send her away, and tell her I will *not* hear a word more about her."

As she spoke thus with angry looks, and in a tone above the usual level of her voice, her father and Lord

Deloraine advanced from the library. The Earl had met the Marquis by accident, and insisted on bringing him home to dinner: Deloraine, grieved and vexed by what had passed in the morning, was desirous of seeing how Rosabelle would receive him, and complied.

He hoped to discover by some word or look that she repented of the part she had acted, and that once more on amicable terms, they might meet at the Opera, and at the duchess's supper, without betraying by any change of manner, the unpleasant scene of the morning. He knew that observing eyes would be fixed upon them, for he had seen in the countenances of the Lady Dewnills' and the Osborne's, that his displeasure and gravity had been remarked by them; and he doubted not that the smallest diminution of his usual attention to Rosabelle, the slightest coldness on her part, would be commented upon, and reported by her associates.

He started as he heard the angry tone of her voice, and saw the traces of resentment on her brow; he looked at Sinclair whose long services were well known to him, and saw tears in her eyes, vexation and disappointment in her manner, as courtesying respectfully to him she released her young lady—and unwillingly withdrew. The eyes of Deloraine followed her; he had as he advanced caught a word or two of what was passing:—Could Rosabelle, the generous Rosabelle, whose only fault seemed to be profusion,—could she refuse even to hear the petition of some one in distress—although entreated to do so by her faithful Sinclair? He longed to ask the meaning of what he had heard; but recollecting the

terms on which they had parted an hour before, he felt not enough at his ease with Rosabelle, to solicit an explanation; and they passed into the dining-room in silence, and with a sort of distance which surprised Lord Clanallan—who could imagine no reason for such an alteration.

Rosabelle's heart, notwithstanding the haughtiness of her spirit, beat with pleasure at the sight of Deloraine; his returning so quickly after the disagreement of the morning, flattered her pride, and led her to hope that her power over him was less limited than he himself believed it; and, that notwithstanding her faults, and the difference of their sentiments on many subjects, he would find it difficult—if not impossible, to withdraw himself from her.

Enlivened by these ideas, she recovered her good-humour and her spirits; was all elegant vivacity mingled with a softness of manner towards Deloraine, that forced him at intervals to lose sight of the events of the morning, and forget the sharp and angry tones in which he had heard her speak to Sinclair; sometimes indeed, the remembrance crossed him, clouding his brow with anxiety, and heaving his bosom with painful sighs; but he was willing to consider Rosabelle's present manner as a proof that she repented the follies he had so seriously reprobated, and was resolved to give up a line of conduct he so greatly disapproved.

Rosabelle's late toilette had prevented dinner from being served up till nearly an hour after the intended time,

and the desert was but just placed on the table when Lady Delmore's carriage was announced, who came to take her to the Opera; where, in a short time after her arrival, she was joined by her father and the Marquis.

In the room where they waited for their carriages after the performance, they encountered the Lady Dewnills', the Miss Osbornes', and their brother.

The young ladies, after glancing their eyes over Lady Glenross's dress, seemed eagerly looking for the novelty she had promised them; Lady Ann Dewnil impatiently whispered a few words to her, and the fair face of Rosabelle was overclouded by chagrin; a few words of her answer met the ear of Deloraine:—he heard her say—"Such a disappointment!—Lace that I had ordered after my own design—a girl that I employed out of charity—Did you ever hear of such impertinence!"

"Oh shameful!" cried Lady Ann, "I hope my dear Countess you will never employ her again!—To be sure you did not take the part she had finished, or pay her a single sixpence!"

"No:" replied Rosabelle, but she blushed and sighed, for her heart had already whispered to her that she had treated the poor girl with injustice and cruelty. "That was right," said the spiteful Lady Ann; "if we did not punish such insolent people they would not care how inattentive they were! I am sure I would not pay her a shilling."

Notwithstanding Lady Ann's encouragement, Rosabelle's more generous feelings told her she had done wrong, and when she caught the eyes of Deloraine, fixed with deep interest on her countenance, as if anxious to comprehend what he heard, she blushed and felt that he at least would severely condemn her; and almost she resolved that in the morning she would pay Nancy Meadows for the lace already completed, and allow her to finish the quantity bespoken.

These better thoughts, however, were driven from her mind by Harriet Osborne, who eagerly drawing the young Countess, a little apart from the circle, seemed to be settling some very interesting and amusing point.

Presently, Miss Osborne casting her eyes round, discovered Lady Mary Graham vainly endeavouring to join them, which the pressure of the crowd rendered very difficult.

"Oh there she is," exclaimed Harriet, "dear Countess how I wish I could speak to her, do Harry," turning to her brother, "go and assist Lady Mary Graham through this intolerable crowd, stay, listen," she added, perceiving he seemed unwilling to go, "I'll tell you what we want her for."

She then whispered a few words to him laughing, and looking as if she was communicating something very amusing, "No indeed," he answered, "I shall not quit my present agreeable station to escort that hideous old woman, unless you will promise to let me be one of your party." "Oh no!" returned his sister, "I cannot; she would not, I am sure,

show off before you, but do go Harry, Lady Glenross wishes it."

"Oh, to oblige Lady Glenross," said the coxcomb with a conceited air—"No, I beg Mr. Osborne" said Rosabelle, coloring, "you will not give yourself the smallest trouble on my account." "Can I do any thing for you Lady Glenross?" said Deloraine, pleased with the air of distance and dignity with which she had checked the forwardness of Mr. Osborne.

"Thank you my Lord," she said, coloring excessively. "No, it is of no consequence!—I—that is—Miss Osborne wished to speak to Lady Mary Graham." "I shall be happy," he replied, "to assist Lady Mary to join her *friends*, her various good qualities will always ensure to her every testimony of my respect."

He then joined Lady Mary, and soon succeeded in placing her by the side of Lady Glenross and Miss Osborne, as conversation was now carried on in a low voice, and it was easy to see that the Lady Dewnil's, and the Miss Osborne's were forming some plan, in which Rosabelle was associated, her eyes sometimes cast down, sometimes glancing towards Deloraine, her varying color, and the expression of her countenance, seemed, he thought, to denote her reluctance to be a party in this scheme, whatever it was; which the other girls with eager gestures and affected admiration, seemed urging her to join.

Now and then she smiled and appeared to catch the spirit

of ridicule which they were evidently striving to excite, while Lady Mary with mouth half open, slight curtsies, and a pleased expression of countenance, appeared to be swallowing the flattery which the Lady Dewnil's stood pouring into her ears.

At length Rosabelle seemed not only to yield to her tempters, but fully to catch the spirit of mockery ; her eyes brightened, she laughed, and whispering a few words to Lady Mary, the matter appeared to be finally settled, and they hastily parted, because the carriages were announced.

To the Duchess of Dunbayne's, Deloraine followed the young Countess, vainly hoping to find ten minutes in which he might learn from her, what new plans were in agitation to make Lady Mary ridiculous, for that something of the kind was intended he was convinced ; but though he sat next her at supper, they were so surrounded, and the eyes of all were so fixed upon her as the chief attraction of the evening, that being her first appearance at the Duchess's select parties, that he could not find a moment's opportunity for particular conversation.

The evening concluded with singing, in which Rosabelle bore a conspicuous part, and charmed all who heard her ; by the sweetness and power of her voice, and the taste, accuracy, and feeling with which she sang. Her rich, enchanting tones, her beauty and elegance of demeanor excited the admiration of the circle ; some persons expressed to Lord Deloraine the most flattering encomiums on the object of his choice, and assurances that he was considered as a most en-

viable being, in having gained the affections of so lovely a creature.

Her charms, her loveliness, the heart of Deloraine amply acknowledged; but painful doubts, uneasy recollections, rankled in his bosom, and forbade him to consider himself as altogether the enviable object his friends believed him.

Chapter IV.

The Pas de deux.—Evil Counsellors.

IN his retirement, vexatious thoughts pursued the Marquis ; notwithstanding the lateness of the hour when he went to his chamber, sleep refused to visit him ; his busy mind was employed in retracing all that had passed in the course of the day.

The glimpses he had caught of the real character of Rosabelle ; the facility with which she yielded herself to be led and impelled as an instrument in the hands of those so much her inferiors, her mockery of Lady Mary Graham, the unbending spirit, the want of proper feeling she had displayed in answer to his representations ; her angry tones in speaking to Sinclair, and the words he had caught of their conversation, all recurred to his remembrance and awakened the most serious and anxious reflections.

Painful were his doubts, whether he should dare to entrust to a young woman whose character seemed so full of error, not only the peace of his future life, but perhaps the guidance and direction of his children. From considerations of such high importance, he started back with renewed uneasiness!—Yet the youth, the loveliness, and the trying station of Rosabelle were powerful arguments in favor of the hope that time and better counsels might eradicate all that was faulty, and confirm all that was good in her temper and disposition.

To withdraw on the perception of errors which the world would think slight, after the publicity which it was evident his addresses had obtained, was not lightly to be thought of: yet not to be ruled by the world or its “dread laugh,” was amongst the fixed principles of Deloraine; he concluded, therefore, to see what the coming day would produce, to be satisfied that no hasty or ill-founded judgment should influence his conduct towards Rosabelle, once more to reason, with her, and if all failed—How deep, how painful was the sigh which heaved his heart, as the conviction followed, that, then, with whatever misery to himself, Rosabelle must be resigned.

Uneasy slumbers, from which he awoke, with a heavy sense of anxiety pressing on his heart, afforded him but little refreshment, and he arose determined to seek Rosabelle as soon as he could suppose she would be visible after the late hours of the preceding night.

A fine morning invited the Marquis to walk to Park-lane, at the entrance of the street, he met Lord Clanallan who told

him that Mrs. Fitzpatrick had been suddenly summoned into Yorkshire to attend a dying sister, that she had departed at an early hour in the morning and her return was uncertain ; as the Earl concluded, however, that her absence would not exceed a few weeks he said he should not supply her place.

“ If Rosabelle were less giddy,” he added, “ I should now think her old enough to be left to her own guidance, except when she goes into public, where, of course, she will be chaperoned by Lady Delmore, till you, my dear Deloraine, take charge of her yourself ; an event, which I honestly tell you I wish to hasten, that she may be effectually separated from the Dewnil’s and Osborne’s, who are doing all in their power, to spoil her ;—your sobriety, my dear Marquis, will, I trust, counterbalance Rosabelle’s extreme vivacity,—I left her now surrounded by those wild girls who seem full of mischief.”

“ The mischief, my dear Lord,” said Deloraine, with a sigh, “ is indeed, of a most serious nature, it is impossible to tell you how uneasy her intimacy with those young women makes me !”

“ Break it off, then, break it off at once !” said the Earl, who having never in his life contradicted his daughter, was very willing to confer upon any body else the trouble of doing so now, “ tell her fairly you insist upon it, I am convinced her attachment to you will ensure your success.”

“ Would I dared believe so !” replied Deloraine, “ for it is, to the happiness of both, absolutely essential.—The fairest and most ingenuous disposition in the world is rapidly depreciating, under the influence of spirits most unworthy of being

its associates, still more of being its guide. It is my settled purpose, my dear Lord, to try, by all the powers of reasoning, and all the persuasions of affection, to withdraw Rosabelle from her present intimates ! Should I not succeed !” He sighed, and pressing the hand of the Earl, left him almost as uneasy as he was himself.

There was a slight hesitation in the Porter’s reply to the Marquis’s inquiring whether Lady Glenross was at home that led him to suppose she was not visible to general visitors ; he was however, of course admitted, and in passing through the entrance hall, the door of a parlor standing half open, his eyes were caught by the sight of Sinclair, who seemed to be in earnest conversation with two females, the one elderly, the other young ; the elder of the two, who looked very ill, appeared to be eagerly soliciting some favor of Sinclair, while a slight expression of anger on her countenance was mingled with the earnestness of her supplication ; the youngest was evidently weeping. Sinclair was wiping her eyes, and over her hand hung some pieces of lace, which by the gestures of all seemed to be the object of the conference. Deloraine combining these appearances with the words he had caught the day before, both at the door of the dining saloon, and at the opera, involuntarily paused at the door, and Sinclair coloring, dropped a respectful courtesy. Deloraine, as usual, spoke to her with kindness, and in so doing advanced a few steps into the room, though he fancied he could read in the eyes and manner of Sinclair, a wish that he should not do so. “ My Lady is in her own drawing-room, my Lord Marquis,” she said, gathering up the lace in her hand.

“Alone, Sinclair?” “No my Lord, the Lady Dewnils, the Miss Osbornes and Lady Mary Graham, are with her.” “What have you there, Sinclair?” said the Marquis, with a smile, “it seems to be very beautiful; will you not let me see it? But what is the matter,” he added, turning to the girl, who abashed at his notice and trying to conceal her tears, shrunk behind her mother, here seems to be some distress? Can I be of any service in relieving it? speak my good girl, tell me, or let your mother, if this be your mother, tell me what is the subject of your sorrow?”

“Oh, my Lord,” said the mother, eagerly, “if your Lordship will be so good, so very good as to hear us! If you will only just beg my Lady Countess not to leave the lace on our hands, if she will only pay us a part of the price, Nancy shall work day and night to complete the quantity! Indeed, my Lord, it was only my illness that prevented it from being done. What could she do? Your Lordship’s honour may well think she would have been glad to execute such a noble order for such a grand Lady, but she could not leave me to perish for want of help! Many times I said to her, Nancy, child, never mind me, go on with the lace, my Lady Countess will be angry.” But she said, “No, mother, though she is a great Lady, she never can be angry that I should leave every thing to nurse my mother! But I said again, you know Nancy, her Ladyship is so passionate, so very passionate! You know Mrs. Benson told us so and won’t bear the least disappointment without being quite in a rage like!” She might have gone on for an hour. Deloraine heard not another word. Rosabelle so very passionate! In a

rage at every trifling disappointment! Was this her character amongst her servants and dependents, was it spoken of as an acknowledged fact? Was then her gentle sweetness only a semblance of an amiable disposition? He cast his eyes on Sinclair, who confused and distressed, shrunk from their scrutiny, while her looks and gestures vainly endeavored to convey to the voluble Mrs. Meadows a wish for her silence."

"Why you know, Mrs. Sinclair," said the woman mistaking her meaning, and supposing she intended to contradict her, "you know, I only speak the truth! You told me but yesterday, that you had spoken to my Lady as she went in to dinner, but she was very much out of humor, very angry at the disappointment, and would not hear a word of the matter, but that you would try again to-day, when perhaps she would be in a better temper!"

Pale and agitated, Deloraine now in a low voice, requested Sinclair would tell him explicitly the cause of complaint this woman had against her Lady, but Sinclair shrunk from the task, and Mrs. Meadows herself told him the story.

He heard it in silence; "Take the lace Sinclair," he said, when it was ended. "Here is my purse, pay this good girl the price of her work, and give her whatever you please for herself; her kindness and duty to her mother deserve to be rewarded! I will settle the matter with your Lady, who I am certain only wants to have it properly represented, to do, what I now do in her name."

He then hastily left the apartment, followed by the thanks and blessings of Mrs. Meadows, and the humble courtesies and tearful eyes of Nancy.

In the anti-room to Rosabelle's apartments, the Marquis paused a moment, to collect his scattered thoughts and compose his agitated spirits, but he had no time for reflection, for sounds of mirth and joy from the drawing-room struck on his ear; in the present frame of his mind they would have been discordant whatever were their source, but when he believed they were the tokens of some new scheme of ridicule, his indignation rose almost beyond his power to govern, he hastily opened the door and heard voices in loud approbation, followed by the clapping of hands, as if applauding some display of excellence. His agitated heart almost prevented him from distinguishing objects, but when a little recovered, what was the dismay with which he gazed upon the scene before him.

At a harp sat Lady Ann Dewnil, she was playing the air of a favorite pas de deux in a new ballet. Rosabelle in a light fanciful dress of silver gauze, her head crowned with wreaths of flowers, was acting as dancing mistress to Lady Mary Graham, who, most fantastically attired, and half covered with flowers of the gayest colors, was imitating the steps and attitudes of her elegant instructress. The contrast afforded by the light airy figure of Rosabelle with the large heavy person of Lady Mary, so unsuitably attired and so absurdly occupied, was in itself most ridiculous, and the "busy mockers," who had stimulated her to this strange exhibition, who had inflamed

her vanity and had excited her folly, were in transports of mirth at the success of their machinations.

But the mirth was subdued and covered with a shade of apparent admiration. "Charming! Admirable! Oh Lady Mary, that is delightfully executed!" resounded through the apartment, while Rosabelle herself, in arch triumph, led the victim of her delusions through the mazes of the *pas de deux*, in which she was so busily instructing her!

The entrance of Lord Deloraine caused a momentary cessation; his pale countenance, the grief which his eyes expressed, checked the gaiety of the circle.

Rosabelle turned pale, colored, and stood suspended in the beautiful attitude Lady Mary was awkwardly attempting to imitate. Deloraine crimsoned, hesitated, and had almost resolved instantly to withdraw never to return: but conquering the impulse of his irritated spirit, he coldly bowed, and seemed waiting to be told that his presence was not an intrusion.

"Oh, Marquis, is it you?" said the incorrigible Miss Osborne, "pray come in, Lady Glenross will of course feel no restraint from *your* presence, and you will certainly be charmed to see her to so much *advantage*! Now, does not she look lovely? Go on dear Countess! Pray, finish that elegant movement, I am quite delighted to see how Lady Mary improves under your instruction!" A lurking sneer was easily discernible under this apparent applause, and Deloraine would not gratify the speaker by

discovering how much he was displeased; he therefore coolly walked towards the window, saying in a low tone, he hoped he did not intrude.

“Oh, indeed, I cannot exhibit before Lord Deloraine,” said Lady Mary, with affected childishness, “pray, let us stop, and resume our practice some other morning.” “I believe it will be better,” said Rosabelle in a low voice and with down cast eyes. “Oh, not at all, not at all!” cried Lady Ann Dewnil, “I am sure the Marquis will be greatly *entertained*. Besides, if you lose a moment’s practice, you will not be able to execute this sweet dance in any perfection next week.”

“Do you know, Marquis, our charming Countess, is going to give us a delightful little fancy ball next week? I believe she meant it to be an agreeable surprise to you, but since you have learned thus much, I dare say she will forgive me for telling you more. Won’t you, dear creature, won’t you forgive me?” “Oh, certainly,” said Rosabelle, laughing; but Lord Deloraine does not appear so amicably disposed; he looks by no means exhilarated by the confidence you repose in him!”

Deloraine cast on her a reproachful glance, she colored, but turning aside to hide her vexation, said to Lady Mary with an air of assumed gaiety, “Come coz, this is the next step!” “Oh, we all know,” said Lady Ann, tossing her head, “that the Marquis only desires to be confided in by *one*, and treats every thing any one else says, with indifference or contempt!” “I trust, madam,” said Deloraine, repelling this clumsy attempt at raillery,

by an air of coldness, "that whoever *confides* in *me*, will never have any reason to repent it, or find that the trust reposed in me exposes them to ridicule and falsehood!" And his eyes glanced expressively from Rosabelle to Lady Mary.

"Lord! you are always so grave!" said Lady Ann, putting up her lip, contemptuously, "do you really Marquis, never for a moment drop that sententious tone, which though certainly very *respectable*, is by no means entertaining? Pardon me, you know I never disguise my real opinions!" "*Never, madam?*" asked Deloraine, with marked emphasis, "pardon *me*, if in my turn, with at least equal sincerity, I ask if *you* never for a moment drop that tone of ridicule, which, excuse me, is in my eyes by no means *respectable*, though to *you* it may be very *entertaining*!"

"How savage you are, Marquis!" said Lady Ann, hiding her chagrin under an affected laugh. "Come, come, go on dear Countess, Lady Mary will not be able to take her part in this pretty ballet, if you neglect her thus."

But Rosabelle, vexed at the turn of this whole conversation, said she was completely tired, and throwing herself on an ottoman, was instantly surrounded by the flattering groupe, who fanned her, poured essences on her face and hands, and seemed like vassals encircling their sovereign. While Lady Mary, overcome with heat and fatigue, perhaps with a consciousness of folly, was fanning her crimson face, and throwing her uncouth figure into

twenty different attitudes. Rosabelle speedily recovering herself, and apparently ashamed of having been checked in her career, by the seriousness of the Marquis, now, although professing herself too much fatigued to resume for the present her instruction to Lady Mary, entreated Miss Osborne and the Lady Dewnils' to sing a *trio*, with which they complied.

When they were gathered round the piano forte, Deloraine, quietly approaching, sat down by Rosabelle, and said in a low voice, "I ought perhaps to apologize for the disturbance I have evidently given to your amusements, but my mind is too much oppressed to vent its feelings in words of compliment. Rosabelle, I must talk with you! I have much to say! To endure this torture many more hours is not in my power!"

"I am sure," said Rosabelle, with tears of vexation in her eyes, "the unpleasantness of your sensations cannot exceed the uneasiness of mine! To be thus forever checked!—disturbed!—exposed to the satirical remarks of those around us! Believe me, Lord Deloraine, the last twenty four hours cannot have been more painful to you, than you have (no doubt, in all kindness) rendered them to me!" "This," said Deloraine, with a sigh, "is no time for explanation, when do these people leave you?" "My friends," said Rosabelle, with marked emphasis, "are going in less than an hour to a sale of shells, I had intended to go with them, but, my head aches, I am tired."

"Kindly say at once," answered Deloraine, "that to

relieve my uneasiness, (I hope to remove that which mutually oppresses us,) you will remain at home! In an hour then, Rosabelle, I will join you again, and will hope for an uninterrupted conversation." Rosabelle bowed with an air of distance and constraint, though her heart throbbed and her cheek turned pale as she reflected on what the issue of that conversation might be, and Deloraine, slightly bowing to the rest of the circle, glided silently away.

Scarcely had he quitted the apartment when the music ceased, and every voice, though with affected apologies to Rosabelle, was loud in condemning the coldness and severity of his manners.

"I declare," cried Lady Ann, pettishly, "he grows quite savage! and will soon be only fit to live in a cell, and forswear the world and all its vanities."

"Oh, let him shut himself up and welcome," said Miss Osborne, "as long as he does not condemn our lovely friend to an equal seclusion. Good heaven! Pardon me, dear Countess! But, can a friend who loves you—who idolizes your beauty and your talents, endure to think they are thus to be sacrificed—thus controlled! and ultimately lost to the world under the despotic rule of a *Lord and Master* like Lord Deloraine! We are all friends here, and, I believe, all equally regret that at so early an age, with the world before you, you, that might choose amongst a thousand all proud to be your slaves, and never thinking of contradicting you, should thus dispose of yourself; to a man who will restrain your every action, quarrel with your

very looks, and over cloud your happy and joyous vivacity, by his affected and unreasonable gravity."

"Speak for yourself Miss Osborne," said the blunt Lady Mary, "I, for one, admire the Marquis extremely, I know he is an excellent young man, I have heard of a thousand good actions of his"—"Oh very *good*, no doubt," said Miss Osborne, with a sneer, "a thousand pities he was hindered from being a *parson*! But not very *amusing* you will allow!"

"Yes, very amusing Miss Osborne," rejoined Lady Mary "I have heard the best judges say, that he has the readiest wit, and the finest mind imaginable, that his conversation is a perfect treat. And as to vivacity, who has more? How admirably he dances!—how sweetly he sings? Who can be more entertaining in his remarks, though never ill-natured, never saying an unkind word of any one!"

"*Hear her! hear her!*" cried Lady Ann Dewnil, "I declare Lady Mary is quite eloquent in praise of the young Marquis. It's quite a pity she cannot have him herself!—Why do you not try Lady Mary, I think it would be an excellent match?"

"No, no, Lady Ann," replied Lady Mary, "*that quiz* is rather too obvious! Fool enough I often am, and easily duped, but you will not persuade me I am a fit match for such an elegant young man as Lord Deloraine. As for his gravity to day, perhaps something annoyed him, perhaps he wanted to speak to my cousin and did not like the noise we were making; nay, I could see by his looks that he thought I was making myself ridiculous and was sorry for it, and in-

deed I always thought so, only you young ladies over-persuaded me; so now I give you notice, I shall have nothing to do with this ballet, one of you may take my place. Good morning to you all!—Dear coz,” she whispered to Rosabelle, “don’t let them persuade you to quarrel with the Marquis! I am mistaken if Harriet Osborne has not her own private reasons for wishing it!—Good by, and go on your own way without minding these chattering girls; one word from Lord Deloraine is worth all the nonsense they will talk for this twelvemonth.”

She then departed, leaving the circle exasperated at her defection and more than ever angry with Deloraine who had been the primary cause of her rebellion.

“It was intolerable,” Lady Ann declared, “to be deprived of such a source of amusement as her dancing would have been;” and Harriet Osborne, in low insidious whispers represented the folly of trusting her happiness to a man, who while a lover, dared thus openly to disapprove of her actions.”

“Your remonstrances are unnecessary, Harriet,” said Rosabelle, fatigued and out of humor, “I hope I know what is due to my own dignity, nor am I yet obliged to bear the control of Lord Deloraine, perhaps, nay probably, I never shall be!”—an involuntary half sigh concluded her speech, Harriet affected not to hear it.

“Delightful!” she exclaimed, “how I love you for your spirit? Assert yourself, my dear friend and be not borne down by the sententious gravity of Lady Mary Graham’s “*excellent young man!*”

In this advice, Miss Osborne was far from disinterested; wild as at present such an idea seemed to be, she was not without hope, that Lord Deloraine once dismissed, her brother might gradually succeed to the favor of Rosabelle.

She had planned for him a system of unlimited subservience to Rosabelle's wishes, an obsequious devotion to her very caprices, which in a heart so haughty and imperious as she knew Rosabelle's to be, might, she thought, advance him imperceptibly, even more effectually than Deloraine's superior merit, when Deloraine dared to contradict her! That end once obtained, Harry Osborne felt resolved to assert his power, and be that very tyrant his sister affected to suppose Lord Deloraine would prove.

This, then, was the real spring of Harriet's advice and unceasing representations to the young Countess, and this design, notwithstanding her usual want of penetration, some accidental circumstances had revealed to Lady Mary Graham.

In a few minutes the whole set departed, and Rosabelle declining to accompany them, remained with secret agitation and pretended indifference to wait the return of the Marquis.

Chapter V.

Separation.—Stormy Passions.—A Father's Reproaches.

IN vain did Rosabelle try to suppress the emotion with which she heard Deloraine ascend the stairs, her varying color, and the tremor which made her lips quiver, and her voice falter as she spoke to him evinced her agitation.

Deloraine himself was more composed, during his short absence he had been exerting all the powers of his reason, all the resolution of a well regulated mind, to obtain such a degree of calmness as might enable him to be firm during the impending conference.

Nevertheless, his cheek was pale, and the low tones of his voice showed that the feelings of his heart, however for the present subdued, were profound. Seating himself by Rosabelle, he took her hand and entered at once upon the subject he considered of such vital importance to them both.

He spoke to her first of the tenderness of his regard, of the high estimation in which he held her admirable qualities. He then painted to her the life of felicity, of every reasonable gratification, which, when she should be his wife, he looked forward to as their mutual lot.

He drew no air built schemes of wild extravagant delight, no scenes of permanent bliss, beyond the reach of humanity; but he presented to her mind the powers which awaited them, not only of being happy in themselves, but of extending a large portion of happiness to all around them.

He spoke of the joy of giving to those who needed, of consoling those who were afflicted,—he talked of drawing round them a circle of friends for their more immediate associates, and of extending their pleasures by entering occasionally into that elegant society which their rank and wealth placed so much within their reach.

Far from requiring from her a narrow contempt of innocent amusements, he dwelt with pleasure on the variety of entertainments which they might so easily obtain, the delights arising from the cultivation of the fine arts in themselves and others, the varied charms of nature, the investigation of the treasures she produces!

To representations so cheering, the natural goodness of Rosabelle's heart, inclined her to listen with delight, and she silently asked herself what beyond this she could require to make her happy?

But determined in nothing to deceive her, Deloraine now

turned with anguish of heart, and a faltering voice to the blight which the last two days had thrown over his pleasant prospects, he candidly and honestly told her how greatly he was dissatisfied with her present intimates, and the tone of character she was, under their influence, most unfortunately acquiring.

“ Oh, how unlike,” he said, “ how very unlike to the Rosabelle my heart had pictured ! Where is the generosity of feeling, the softness of temper, and the delicacy of sentiment I had looked for in Rosabelle ? Why, alas, do I see you imitating the heartless levity of Harriet Osborne ?—The cold sneer of Lady Ann Dewnil, and the frivolous inanity of her sister ? Beings, in themselves, so inferior ; to me so insupportable ! No Rosabelle, while this connection lasts, I should vainly look for happiness, even with you ! I cannot see with patience, the fine qualities of your mind, the graces of your person, the power which your station and your talents bestow, thus rendered instruments in the hands of malignity to the completion of the most mischievous purposes ! Under the influence of these associates, where you should extend protection, you invite ridicule ; the follies you should kindly conceal, you are the foremost to expose ! Believe me Rosabelle, where this unlimited love of what is called *quizzing* exists, it is the bane and blight of every ennobling sentiment, and of every elevated feeling. Hardness of heart, cold mockery of all that is serious ; sometimes, alas, of all that is holy, are but too often its concomitants. Of any thing so atrocious as the last fault to which I have alluded, my Rosabelle never can be guilty, but even without extending the error to an excess so revolting, it is, I am afraid incompatible, not only with the softness and delicacy of the female character, but with that warm and active spirit of religion,

which leads to all that is meek, all that is gentle, all that is charitable !

“ Pardon me, Rosabelle, if I say that where this genuine spirit exists not, all the talents, all the graces, all the charms that ever decked a woman, would fail to make me happy !— In that alone, could I hope for security in my domestic happiness ; to that alone, could I look with certainty, as the guard of her principles and her temper.”

“ Enough, my Lord,” said Rosabelle, her proud and resentful spirit rising against the seriousness of this representation, “ you have said enough, I spare you any farther expression of the change in your opinions ! It is, indeed, best that we part, beings, so unlike in their feelings and their views, never could be happy together. If every little error is to be magnified into a crime ; if every sportive amusement is to be denied ; if a cold and narrow bigotry which you call religion is to check my youthful gaiety, to limit the circle of my acquaintance, to discard from my house the friends I regard ;—small, indeed, would be my chance for felicity. I have no taste for preaching, no disposition to be confined to the society of people, who are too wise and too good to live in a world which I find very agreeable, and have no intention of renouncing for the penance of a hermitage !”

“ Oh, Rosabelle,” said Deloraine, “ how cruelly, how wilfully do you mistake me ! Do I ask you to renounce the world ? Do I wish to check the gaiety, which, properly exerted, is my delight ? What do I desire, but that you should relinquish a society which injures you, and from which, I am certain, in your better moments, you can derive

no pleasure ; that you should mingle with your vivacity, that sobriety of mind, which can alone render it as durable as it is enchanting. Pardon me, Rosabelle, in this explanation, whatever be its end,—I will conceal nothing. Can I help wishing, that you should a little abate that haughtiness of spirit which rejects the mildest reproof, which sometimes exposes you to invidious remarks, which irritates the temper, and gives an apparent selfishness to the conduct, not, I am sure, natural to the heart of Rosabelle.”

With eyes which sought not to oppress her, with a varying cheek and trembling accents, Deloraine made this gentle appeal ; but Rosabelle, her proud indocible spirit taking fire at his words, started from her seat, her eyes flashing indignant lightning, and her cheeks crimson.

“ Good heavens,” she exclaimed, “ are there no more than these, in the black catalogue of my heinous faults !—Pride !—Selfishness !—Enough, enough !—This from the man who pretends to love me ?—If now, thus quick in discerning my errors, what would he be hereafter ? To me, to you, my Lord, that hereafter, as mutually concerning us, shall never come. Henceforth, let us meet no more ! I would not burthen you with a wife,—I would not even trouble you with an acquaintance who must be in your eyes so utterly contemptible !”

She sunk again upon her seat, and with one hand covering her face, with the other she proudly motioned him to leave her.

“ Oh, not thus Rosabelle,” he cried, in tones of anguish,

“if we, indeed, must part, let it not be thus, in anger ! As your friend, I wished to be considered, as well as your lover ! Poor, indeed, is that love, the offspring of passion only,—which seeks not the well being of its object ! Did I love you less, I might be less anxious to find you perfect ;—less concerned at errors, which the slightest exertion of your superior mind might so easily remedy.”

“Oh, no flattery, I beg, my Lord,” said Rosabelle, scornfully, “pray do not try to soften the wounds you have inflicted ! I know, thank heaven, I know before it is too late, your opinion of me, and gladly, joyfully, withdraw from any further connection with one who loves to look on the dark side of things, and is, I doubt not, most willing to condemn me.”

“Oh, how little do you know me, Rosabelle !” said Deloraine, “how little do you guess the anguish I have endured before I could resolve thus to distress you ! Nothing but the events of this morning,—nothing but the sorrow I felt to hear you ill spoken of, even beneath your own roof, could have given me courage to go thus far.”

“Ill spoken of,—and under my own roof !” exclaimed Rosabelle, “who has dared.”

Deloraine colored and cast down his eyes.

“Explain yourself, my Lord,” she said, “I insist upon knowing your full meaning.”

“You have, I doubt not, been mistaken,” said Deloraine,

“ the last faults I could expect from you would be a want of compassion, and generosity, I might say, could what I have heard be true, a want of justice.”

He then as delicately as possible repeated to her his accidental rencontre with the lace girl, and her mother; but without telling her more of the part he had taken, than that he had given Sinclair such directions as had for the present satisfied the complainant.

Rosabelle heard him in silence, her heart was deeply affected, hardly could she restrain her tears; she felt, she acknowledged to herself, the injustice of which she had been guilty,—she was ashamed to recollect the cruelty of her conduct.

But false pride forbade the avowal,—she hardened herself against compunction,—she thought it would betray too much consideration for Deloraine, something like a fear of losing him if she confessed,—that even before his representation, she had determined to recompense Nancy Meadows for the harshness with which she had treated her.

She would not even condescend to rescue her own character from the imputation of injustice lest Deloraine should fancy it was her regard for him that induced her to defend herself.

Silently, almost sullenly, she heard him, perversely at length she answered him; she told him with assumed coldness of voice and looks, that she desired not his interference, that she was capable of protecting her own consequence and that

thenceforward as all was at an end between them, she requested that he would no more trouble himself either to accuse or defend her!

Struck, petrified by a hardness of manner so unexpected, Deloraine felt that the wildest extreme of anger would have been more supportable; nevertheless, with mild firmness he yet remonstrated, still sought to excite the more generous feelings of her heart, but professing herself completely weary of a conference which she declared to be at once so unpleasant, and so unprofitable, she insisted on his leaving her; and when he yet hesitated, yet lingered, with expressions of grief and anguish in his eyes and on his lips, she coolly looked at her watch, and saying that it was time to dress, coldly wished him a distant good-morning; and snatching away the hand he had again taken to detain her, she flew to her bed-room.

There, locking herself in, the supprest and concentrated agony of her heart burst forth in sobs and cries; half suffocated she threw herself violently on the floor, she abandoned herself to an excess of passionate resentment.

She thought herself the most hardly treated, the most cruelly opprest being in the world; she stifled all remembrance of her own faults and follies, and dwelt with indignation on the words of Deloraine. His mild reproofs, his gentle, though determined remonstrances, she, with resentment, which at the moment seemed to her distorted imagination not undelightful, exaggerated and defied!

In murmuring tones her lips uttered reproaches, and

her soul was torn by conflicting passions. But this frightful excess of rage lasted not long; by degrees her tears flowed more gently, her sobs of passion were changed into sighs of grief; and ashamed of having yielded to such an extreme of anger, she slowly arose.

As she cast her eyes around, they fell upon a large mirror which stood opposite.

She started at the figure it reflected! The garlands in which she had adorned herself for a purpose now hateful to her recollection, fell in disorder round her face; her hair dishevelled, her dress wild and discomposed, the paleness of her cheeks—the traces of every bitter passion on her brow—she looked like some disgraced and fallen spirit,—degraded from its high station, its angelic beauty overclouded, and torn from every better purpose of its being!

“Is this,” she mentally exclaimed, “the bright and flattered Rosabelle! This, she whose smile was illumination, whose lightest frown seemed the signal of dismay to all who bent around her!—Oh, victim of passion, where is now thy beauty? where the elegance and grace so vaunted, which fed thy youthful vanity, perhaps to thy undoing. On features thus disfigured, on a countenance thus impressed by every unruly emotion, how would the calm—the dignified—the happily tempered Deloraine look with astonishment and disgust!”

At the idea of his being calm while she was thus torn by the phrenzy of her rage, of his enjoying serenity when

he had made her so miserable, new paroxysms of passion seized her!—She tore the disordered flowers from her hair and trampled them under feet; she gave way again to all the wild expressions of rage for which she had so lately blushed!————

Alas! for Rosabelle!—There was no steady principle in her mind to enable her firmly and collectedly to repel the natural impetuosity of her temper. She had no refuge whither to fly from the storms of passion. She was not impressed with the conviction that she was a responsible being. Had the meanest human creature been present, shame would in some measure have restrained the excesses of her anger; but she did not recollect that an all-seeing eye pervaded the gloom of her chamber, and the inmost recesses of her heart. Had she done so, she would have feared to yield to such a sinful extreme of passion. To resist its ravages, mere unassisted reason was not sufficient; and she had never been taught to seek that divine influence which can alone check and subdue the workings of pride and passion.

At length, exhausted by her own vehemence, she sunk upon her bed and fell into a kind of heavy doze; from which she was awakened by Benson's knocking at the door, and asking her if she would not please to dress for dinner. "I am not well," she faintly said as she raised her aching head from the pillow, "I shall eat no dinner; tell my father so, Benson." "My Lord dines out Madam," said Benson. "So much the better!" sighed Rosabelle, "Go, I will ring when I want you."

Again she fell into an unquiet slumber; and waking, found the shades of evening round her.

Starting suddenly, she determined to rise,—to dress,—to go out. “He shall not have the triumph of supposing I regret our separation,” she said, “the world shall not say I am pining in solitude for a faithless lover.—Oh, already I know this world, its little malice, its ill-timed jests, its false condolence!—And for this hollow and gilded world, I have relinquished!—Oh let me not consider what!”—

She raised her aching head and rang for lights, but when Benson^e arrived she could hardly find strength to totter across the room and unlock the door. “Dear, dear, my Lady,” said Benson setting down the candles, “how ill you look; and the room is so cold, the fire out—every thing uncomfortable!—Pray tell me what is the matter?—Had not your Ladyship better undress and go to bed, and let me send for Doctor B——” “Nonsense,” faintly interrupted Rosabelle, “I am not ill, only excessively fatigued with dancing this morning. I think too I have a slight cold;” she sat down, while her cheek was alternately flushed and pale, and her tremor seemed rather to increase than diminish, “however get my things ready to dress, I am going to Lady Selby’s rout.”

“There is a good fire in your dressing-room, my Lady,” said Benson, as she led the way to it, followed by the dejected Rosabelle, “but indeed you had better take something, you have eaten no dinner.”

But the appetite of Rosabelle was totally gone;—a violent head-ache, pains in her limbs, and shiverings, seemed to foretell the approach of a serious illness, to which however she would not yield; she struggled hard with the increasing wretchedness of her feelings, and, a little revived by the warmth of her dressing-room and a cup of Coffee which she forced herself to take, she insisted on being dressed. For the first time in her life, she sought the assistance of art to conceal the ravages which illness and vexation had made in her complexion; but rouge could not restore the brilliancy of her eyes, or the sweetness of her smiles; faded, and with the traces of ill-suppressed anxiety pervading every feature, she looked several years older than she had done the night before.

While dressing, a letter was brought to her, she started when she saw the hand-writing of Deloraine, but with a hasty and resentful action, she instantly folded it, unopened, in a blank cover; and directing it to the Marquis, ordered Benson to give it to the servant who waited for an answer: too much absorbed by her own feelings, to observe the curious eyes with which Benson noticed what was passing. Then, hardly able to support herself, she got into her carriage and was conveyed to Lady Delmore's, and from thence to Lady Selby's.

Fortunately, her particular intimates were not there; she could not have borne the eager questions with which the Dewnills' and Osbornes' would have assailed her on her altered looks, of which she was fully aware, nor the officious gallantries of Captain Osborne; which, however,

she had lately encouraged by way of amusement, she now felt herself quite unable to endure.

She forced her spirits however, and to a slight observer, might have appeared as full of vivacity as ever.

Increasing fever flushed her cheeks and gave an unnatural brilliancy to her eyes; but there was a wanness on her temples, and a heaviness in her countenance, which to those who looked at her attentively denoted either sickness or sorrow; it was certain she was but too sensible of both.

At length this evening, the most tedious Rosabelle had ever known, drew to a close; the carriage was announced, and leaning on the arm of Lady Delmore gladly did she retire, hoping in a cooler atmosphere to breathe more freely, and shake off the head-ache which opprest her. Lady Delmore remarked as they descended the staircase, that her young companions hand burnt with feverish heat; "It almost scorches me through your glove, my dear," she said, "and yet you shiver, draw your shawl on you, I fear you have taken cold." Rosabelle silently obeyed, and felt relieved from a miserable restraint when the carriage stopped at her own door. "Send Benson to me directly," she faintly said as she ascended the stairs, "I must go immediately to-bed."

"My Lord is waiting to speak to your Ladyship in the library," said the groom of the chambers. "To-night! At this late hour!" said Rosabelle, surprised, "Pray tell my father that I am far from well, Albury,

and very much fatigued; I must beg to defer seeing him till the morning."

"My Lord sent particular orders," said Albury respectfully, "to the Porter, to me, and to your Ladyship's women, that he must see you before you went to your room."

"Well, then," sighed Rosabelle, desponding and sick at heart—"go on, I will follow you." "I am sure," said Benson, who had joined them in the gallery, "your Ladyship is much fitter to go to-bed; pray let me tell my Lord that you are not well, Madam."

"No, no matter," answered Rosabelle, while mentally she added, "will the vexations of this terrible day never have an end!"

She guessed but too well the subject on which her father wished to speak to her, and now, for the first time, she shrank with sensations almost amounting to fear, from his apprehended reproaches. Pale, trembling, and opprest almost to suffocation, she entered the library:—the Earl received her with a cold and stern silence, on his brow sat a gloomy discontent, not unmingled with traces of a tenderer sorrow. Unable to stand, Rosabelle sank upon a chair, and the pause of the next few minutes seemed to her beating heart to concentrate more wretchedness than she had before supposed the whole of human life could furnish.

"You will not be at a loss, Lady Glenross," said

the Earl, “ to guess the subject on which I mean to address you, when I tell you I have this evening seen Lord Deloraine.” Rosabelle bowed in silence, and the Earl proceeded in a strain of reproach, such as she had never heard from him; but which her inmost heart told her, she had but too well deserved. In vain she strove to recall that haughty spirit with which she had hitherto opposed reproof; exhausted, and really ill, she had no power to reply. “ Deloraine,” said the Earl, “ with all the natural generosity of his character, strove as much as possible to shield you from blame in the separation, which, yet, he allows is inevitable.

“ With difficulty I gathered from him a slight sketch of those follies by which you have lost the esteem of this excellent young man. To what have you sacrificed his affection?—Oh vain and foolish Rosabelle!—to the idle adulation of coxcombs, to the pernicious society of mischievous girls—who ridicule while they flatter you. Worse than all, to the indulgence of your own violent passions—to your pride and self-love. Miserable father!—Why did I not nip in the bud those evil propensities which have thus destroyed the happiness of the child on whom I doated?—Oh, Rosabelle! too fondly have I cherished, too extravagantly have I indulged you. I have, perhaps, miscalculated, but your felicity was the only end I had in view.—Alas, how have you repaid me !”

Heart-struck by his reproaches, wearied and exhausted by the events of this miserable day, and by the rapid approaches of increasing illness, Rosabelle fainted, and fell from her chair. What then were the wild terrors of the unhappy fa-

ther? He accused himself of cruelty, he repented of his just displeasure, he exclaimed that he had destroyed his darling, his invaluable child, he lost all recollection of her faults, in asense of her danger !

He summoned his servants in alarm, and dispatched messengers to seek the best and speediest medical aid. In anguish inexpressible he saw her carried to her chamber, and waited with overwhelming anxiety for the opinion of the physicians.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

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THE YOUNG COUNTESS.

PART THE THIRD.

Chapter I.

Illness, Desertion, and True Friends.

THE sentence which the physicians pronounced was not of a nature to lessen the Earl's anxiety; they said that not only Lady Glenross appeared to be suffering from a mind and body over-fatigued and exhausted, but that there were symptoms which led them to apprehend the approach of some eruptive fever. They inquired if she had passed through the Small-pox and Meazles, for the both of which Sinclair vouched:—desiring, therefore, that she should be kept extremely quiet, and giving all other necessary directions, they left her, till a few hours

should enable them more clearly to discern the nature of her disease.

On their return they pronounced the disorder to be a scarlet fever, which, from being neglected at its commencement, and the exertions and anxiety of the day before, (the Earl having confided to them that some unpleasant occurrences had extremely agitated his daughter,) had risen most rapidly to a height seldom known in so early a stage of the complaint, and was already both dangerous and infectious.

Nothing could exceed the alarm this declaration inspired. The Earl, distracted with grief and terror, was ready to sacrifice half his fortune to insure, had that been possible, the recovery of Rosabelle, and her frightened and selfish attendants, bound to her by no tie of real affection, immediately refused to enter her chamber, and insisted, on being allowed to leave a house, where, to their startled fancy, every breath came loaded with disease and destruction. Even Benson, who had revelled in the rich spoils her flattery had won from the deluded Countess, now heartlessly forsook her. And Sinclair alone, Sinclair, frequently neglected, often harshly treated, remained hanging over the bed of Rosabelle, soothing her delirium and bathing with the tears of affection her burning hands.

Deloraine, immediately on receiving the letter Rosabelle had so scornfully returned to him, in which he had made one more effort to subdue her pride and soften her resentment, had thrown himself into his travelling carriage

and left London, not intending to visit it again for many months.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was absent, and amongst all the gay connections, in all the flattering circle which had surrounded Rosabelle, where could her wretched father look for a warm-hearted and intelligent friend, who in despite of danger, would now approach to soften his intense anxiety, and direct what was necessary in the chamber of sickness?

Two days after Rosabelle's first seizure, there was an auction of pictures, which called together all the world of fashion; she had visited the rooms in the course of the preceding week, and marked several pictures which she intended to purchase. Then surrounded by a flattering circle, exhilarated by their praises, intoxicated by the homage paid to her taste and judgment, she had lightly moved through the elegant apartments, animating by her gaiety, attracting by her beauty, and delighting by her wit. Now she lay stretched on the bed of sickness, perhaps of death, her beauty faded, and that tuneful voice, on which so many had hung with rapture, uttering only the wild ravings of delirium, or the agonized expressions of self-reproach, without one kind friend to sooth her agitated mind, or catch the happy moment of returning reason and elevate her sorrow into repentance!

"Lord bless me," cried Harriet Osborne, flying up to Lady Mary Graham, "have you heard, Lady Mary, in what a shocking state our dear and lovely friend Lady

Glenross is lying?" "Not I," said Lady Mary, "I have been to Twickenham with the Forbes's for some days past, and am but just returned; but what is the matter with her?" "Oh, such a terrible thing, we went there just now wondering we had not seen her all yesterday, and concluding she would come with us to this auction, and there we found the Earl half mad, the house forsaken by almost all the female servants, two or three physicians coming down stairs with the vilest long faces! Oh,* I assure you we ran out faster than we went in, for the poor dear Countess is dying of a scarlet fever, and they say nobody will go near her, the infection is so terrible! I was so glad to get off: I assure you, I went to a perfumer's directly, and half drowned myself and my sister with Aromatic vinegar, and Eau de Cologne. Goodness!—I hope I have not taken the infection!"

"So!" said Lady Ann Dewnil, coming up, "the pretty little Countess has made a fine end of all her pride and vanity!" "What, is she dead then?" asked Harriet Osborne, with an unmoved countenance and returning, at the same moment, the courtesey of a lady at some distance. "Not quite, but dying." answered Lady Ann, yawning, "but it does not much matter, for I sup-

* Young Ladies of Miss Osborne's description but too frequently *indulge* themselves in *exclamations* shocking to the ears even of many who are not very serious in their religious opinions; we have heard gay young men express their disgust at this practice: but we forbear to sully our pages by *repeating* the revolting terms in which Miss Osborne might have expressed her surprise, alarm, &c, &c.

pose her father never would forgive her even if she recovered. There was a fine piece of work the day we were there, practising the *pas de deux*, you know Lady Mary," she added, with a cold sneer, which raised the colour in Lady Mary's cheek. "Why, what was the matter?" asked Harriet Osborne, "I have not heard a word; tell us, dear creature what did she do?" "Oh, have not you heard!" cried Lady Ann, with an air of importance, "Benson came to our house after her lady was gone out, and told my mother's woman all about it.

"In the first place, Deloraine and the young Countess had a violent quarrel; after we were gone he gave her a lecture about her *impertinence* in quizzing *people*;—you know what I mean Harriet:—and about her passionate temper, which Benson says is intolerable, and some lace girl she had used ill; and she was as usual all pride and imperiousness, and showed herself in her true colours to him, which she had never done before; and when he went away, she flew to her own room, and Benson heard her sobbing and crying for hours, and she did not eat a bit of dinner; and then came a letter from Deloraine, and Benson saw her enclose it in a blank cover and send it back again, so there is an end of that affair. And still she would go to Lady Selby's rout, and I have heard since that her father sat up for her; and when she came back he gave her such a scolding that she fainted away, and was carried to bed, and there she has been ever since with this dreadful fever."

"And pray," said Lady Mary, "how did that treach

erous creature, Benson, learn all this? She must have listened for it." "Oh, I dare say!" answered Lady Ann, "it is very abominable to be sure, but you know servants will talk." "Undoubtedly they will," answered Lady Mary, "if they can meet with Ladies mean enough to encourage such pernicious tale-bearers. And who is now with the poor lassie?" she added, with a pitying face. "Why nobody," said Lady Ann, half sullen, for Lady Mary's words had made even her cold nature feel a degree of shame; "but her old Scotch nurse Sinclair, all the other women are run away, and old Fitzpatrick, you know, is out of town." "And why don't some of ye, that pretended to be so fond of the poor thing, go and nurse and comfort her in her trouble," said Lady Mary, speaking in a broad Scotch accent, as she always did, when painfully affected, ye were all ready enough to run and bow down to her, and make her believe herself all perfection, when she was well and gay, and carried ye about to fine places, and made ye fine presents!" "Me," cried Harriet Osborne, "I am sure, I don't know what you mean, Lady Mary; she never gave me any thing, that is, any thing worth naming, I am sure; I hope my family and fortune put me above wanting presents from any body."

"And mine too!" said Lady Ann, colouring scarlet; "Aye, aye," said Lady Mary dryly, "but sometimes young Ladies of family and fortune do not quite find their allowances enable them to purchase expensive trinkets; those are very handsome cornelians, Miss Osborne, and exactly like some I saw Lady Glenross buy last week. A very elegant pearl necklace and ear-rings, Lady Ann,

those were you wore at Lady Dennington's ball the night before I left town. I think I caught sight of them on the Countess's toilette the morning before." "How odd, how coarse, Lady Mary," said Harriet Osborne, colouring, "who would ever expect, if they *did* accept a keep-sake from a friend, to be told of it again in this strange way?" "*A friend*, and welcome," said Lady Mary, "but you cannot call her a *friend* whom ye forsake and vilify when she is in sickness and sorrow." "I am sure," said Miss Osborne, "I would not go near her for twenty worlds, I am shockingly afraid of a fever."

"And so am I," said Lady Ann, "I dare say I should die of the mere fright; and besides, what good could we do there?" "Not much, indeed, there or any where else," answered Lady Mary; "why, I dare say now, you could not make a good broth, or a bason of whey, or give a medicine to a sick person, if your lives depended upon it." "*I make broth or whey!*" screamed Miss Osborne, "I do not know one from the other!" "*I give a medicine!*" cried Lady Ann, affectedly, "oh!—shocking idea!" "Oh, very shocking!" said Lady Mary, "but as people are so vulgar sometimes as to fall sick, and it is plain, riches cannot always command attendance, I am apt to think, in such a case, a father or husband would like to see a pretty white hand employed in delicately preparing what might tempt a weak appetite, better than in embroidering a flower or playing on the harp. Now, I'll just tell you what, young ladies. My father was *un vieux militaire*, my mother, though a duke's daughter, followed his fortunes; she had six

daughters, not over handsome, and with little but some of the best blood in Scotland for their portion, so she thought they might, as she had done, marry a poor soldier, and follow the camp; she taught us, therefore to be *useful!* And I, yes, you may stare!—I, fool as you have seen me make of myself, can make broth or whey, or even prepare a light pudding for an invalid. Did you ever hear of such a thing? I shall go and nurse Lady Glenross myself.”

“You!” cried Miss Osborne, “oh, Lady Mary, if you did but know!” “If you had but heard!” said Lady Ann, “what *we* have heard her say of *you!* Harriet, Harriet! Do you recollect the ottoman and the pas de deux?” “Oh yes, and the verses about changing the little cottage into a fine palace?” replied Harriet, sneering. “I don’t care what she said,” answered Lady Mary, colouring a little, “nor do I want to hear; poor girl, she says little enough now!” “Oh, but she does,” said Miss Osborne, “she is raving in a delirium!” “Terrible!” said Lady Mary, shuddering, “and is this a time to recollect her childish follies? She is very young, has no mother, has all her life been indulged to an excess; and, excuse me, young ladies, unfortunately selected *acquaintance*, I will not call them *friends*, who stimulated her vanity, encouraged her errors, and now forsake her in her utmost need. Perhaps she has laughed at and quizzed me,—I know *where* she learned that pretty accomplishment,—but I can forgive it all; I am not ashamed to acknowledge she has showed me much kindness on several occasions; so good bye young ladies, I am going to nurse Lady Glenross, and when she is well enough,

I will amuse her by telling her all the obliging things you have said of her."

"Oh Lady Mary!" and "Pray Lady Mary!" the young ladies repeated with looks of confusion, but Lady Mary only nodded at them over her shoulder, and left them a prey to the anxiety they so well deserved to feel.

An hour after this conversation saw Lady Mary established quietly in the sick chamber of Rosabelle, superintending the hired nurses, and relieving the anxious cares of poor Sinclair.

Useful, active, intelligent in sickness, to her prompt attendance, her assiduous kindness, the disease of Rosabelle gradually gave way; it was absolutely necessary that light nourishment should be frequently given, Lady Mary saw that all was prepared in a way to tempt the uncertain taste of an invalid, contrived that every thing should be ready at the instant her patient expressed the slightest inclination for it, and in one word, proved herself a most active nurse and a most consoling friend to her sick relation.

But what were the feelings of Rosabelle when her weakened mind began to regain its powers! What the deep regret with which she remembered the past! Forsaken, neglected, by those she most had cherished, to retain whose regard she had sacrificed so much, and assiduously attended by the woman she had pertinaciously exposed to ridicule! By her, whose weakness she had made her sport, whose follies she had stimulated, and forced upon the notice of others! Forgetting those

excellent qualities she now found so useful, forgetting, alas, the charity which every human being owes to its frail and erring fellow!

Slowly Rosabelle's strength returned, but her vivacity seemed flown for ever; long fits of musing and abstraction, followed by tears and a return of low fever, oppressed her. Her father's kindness was unbounded, he seemed to have forgotten every subject of displeasure, but Rosabelle could not forget; the active attentions of Lady Mary were unceasing, but the sick heart of Rosabelle sighed for a *friend*. She had feelings and remembrances in which she was convinced the mind of Lady Mary, although not deficient in natural powers, could take no part: the world seemed like a blank before her, and at the age of eighteen it wanted but little that she should sink into despair.

All the gay visions of her youth were faded away: of what avail, she thought, was her beauty, of what value her riches, or the talents for which she had been so flattered! All the glittering wreaths which an admiring crowd had hung upon her shrine, were tarnished and decayed, proving that tinsel, not gold, had lent the transient lustre by which they had dazzled her deluded senses! The only man she could have loved, the man whose high qualities had even in parting commanded her esteem, disgusted by her follies, had forsaken her. And how must she have misapplied the rich gifts which had been awarded to her, since in looking round she could not find a friend, she could not recollect the heart she had attached by a single judicious benefit! Money she had indeed in-

discriminately squandered: she had profusedly indulged her own vanity and the frivolity of others, but where was the sinking object of distress she had firmly and rationally relieved? Where the orphan or the widow she had steadily and quietly assisted? Such, alas, were not to be found; she had, indeed, given occasionally, because it pained her to refuse; perhaps, (for she was by no means sure of her motives,) because she was proud of the power of giving.

But often had she capriciously refused her aid, because it had been asked, when, like Richard, her petulant spirit had cried, "thou troublest me, I am not in the vein!" All this she felt, and there were moments when she believed that, for the future, she should resolutely resist her former errors; but desponding thoughts assailed her: she had certainly taken one step towards amendment, by becoming in some degree aware of their existence, but she still wanted some steady principle on which to anchor her intentions of reform. The near approach of death had awakened many serious reflections in her bosom; she felt how much was wanting in herself, either to die in peace, or live in virtue.

She had vague and indeterminate ideas on religious subjects, and her mind was now tossing on a sea of doubts and apprehensions.

Now was the time when a sincere and enlightened friend would have been invaluable; one to whom she could open her whole heart, who could have strengthened her good intentions, have directed her hopes, have confirmed

her piety. Such a friend the goodness of heaven awarded to her! She was sitting one morning, dejected and spiritless, looking back with vain regret, looking forward with feelings almost amounting to despair, when her father entered her apartment, with gladness on his countenance: "I bring you, my love," he said, "something to cheer, to exhilarate, to sooth you! My Rosabelle, I bring you a friend!" "*A friend*," responded the sick heart of Rosabelle, "whence and from what unknown region does she come? Not, I am sure, from those heartless circles I have lately frequented, not from that frozen atmosphere,—the fashionable world!" "Certainly not, from what I should rather term the hot-bed of forced flowers we at present inhabit," said the Earl, with a smile, "but from the hardier climate of the north, if less prolific in luxurious gifts, more healthy, it should seem, in producing the kindly fruits of the heart. I bring you Margaret Bruce."

"Oh, that is indeed a precious gift," said Rosabelle, "there my heart can securely trust, that it yet may find a friend." In another instant, the warm-hearted Margaret was in the arms of Rosabelle, who clasping her to a heart which, even in infancy, had elung to her spontaneously, shed on her bosom the refreshing tears of hope newly revived; of affection once more expanding, without the fear of those noxious blights which of late had withered its fairest blossoms. The soft and clear voice of Margaret, whose slight Scottish accent was from early association pleasant to the ear of Rosabelle, fell, like its national melodies, on her troubled mind, at once cheerful and soothing.

Margaret, it appeared, had come to London with her sister, who had lately married an English Barrister. It was Miss Bruce's intention to remain two or three months with Mr. and Mrs. Burlington, and then return into the North to make a round of visits to friends, who were all eager to have her with them.

She was, herself, under an engagement to the Captain of an East India-man, who was now performing the last voyage he intended to make, and hoped in about a twelvemonth to have realized such an independence, as might enable him to claim his promised bride.

“The marriage of Jane,” said Margaret, “has deprived me of my only companion :—since the death of my dear father we have, as you know, my dear Lady Glenross, resided with the gentleman to whose guardianship he left us. But I feel now so forlorn, so solitary, that till I settle in a house of my own, I shall probably be wandering about to such of my friends as will be troubled with me.”

“Oh that your wanderings might terminate here!” cried Rosabelle, “that Jane would immediately spare you to me, to be my friend, my directress, my consolation. But in this wish, alas, I am conscious that I betray too much that selfishness of spirit, with which, too justly, I have been reproached!” Tears sprung to her eyes, as she remembered Deloraine.

“Why should I ask you to sacrifice the pleasures that await you,—the society of friends whose talents and virtues will afford you so much gratification,—to pass your time with one already an invalid in constitution, a bankrupt in joy?—

One who feels herself unworthy to be ranked amongst the number of your selected intimates ! Oh Margaret, how I wish that from the early period of my life, when first we met, I had been blessed with so dear and able a counsellor as I should have found in you. Then all the errors in my character might have been corrected, then I should have known how to value the happiness—but now—alas—too late—too late !”

Sighs and tears half stifled the words she would have uttered, and her agitation alarmed and distressed the tender Margaret.

“ Oh, say not too late,” she replied in the kindest accents, at your age, what may not be retrieved ?” Rosabelle shook her head. “ We will not, now, my dear Rosabelle, (may I not call you so ?)” said Margaret, “ enter into subjects ill-calculated for your present state, we will very shortly meet again ; in the mean time, I will consider of what you have said to me ; a week or two more I must give to Jane, and devote to seeing a few connections in London. After that, if your health should not be perfectly re-established, if you think my company would cheer you, I will gladly pass some time with you ;—we will talk more of this hereafter, for the present, farewell.”

“ Oh, how should I now part from you,” said Rosabelle, fondly embracing her, “ how bear to terminate the sweetest hour I have passed for many, many weeks, but for the cheering hope you give me, that we shall shortly meet again ? Come soon, dear Margaret, and come often.”

Margaret promised to obey her wishes, and departed,

leaving Rosabelle with lightened spirits, and a heart enlivened by the warmth and kindness of her early friend. A week or two passed on, cheered to the still drooping Rosabelle by occasional visits from Miss Bruce, whose conversation, at once delightful and instructive, won every day more of her affection and confidence.

In the course of this time, the Osbornes' and the Lady Dewnills, had attempted to renew their intimacy with the young Countess; but she had been so hurt by their sudden desertion of her, and so completely emancipated from the thralldom their arts had thrown around her by her own reflections and the information she had received from Lady Mary Graham, that a cold and distant civility at once repelled them, and put a stop to the dangerous intimacy which had cost her so much.

It now became necessary to form a new establishment for Rosabelle; and though Benson and Kitty had entreated to be re-instated in their places, she refused the offered services of those, whose hasty and selfish desertion in the hour of distress, proved how insincere had been the flattery by which they had so long misled her;—she dismissed them, however, without reproaches, and with a mildness of demeanor which while it encreased their confusion, proved the gradual alteration which was taking place in her own heart.

In recollecting the painful events which had immediately preceded her illness, Rosabelle recalled with sorrow, her unkindness to Nancy Meadows, the lace-girl;—she blushed, as she considered, that perhaps, even yet, that poor industrious creature was suffering all the consequences of her unjust dis-

pleasure, and instantly summoning Sinclair, she inquired eagerly, what was become of her.

For the first time, she now learned the kind and delicate interference of Lord Deloraine, and that in her name he had settled that unpleasant affair, and repaired the error into which she had fallen.

Tears of shame and sorrow ran down her burning cheeks.

“ Ah, well might he accuse me of a haughty and selfish spirit,” she mentally exclaimed, “ how low, how mean, must I have appeared to him,—yet how delicately, how gently did he endeavor to reclaim me from errors which he kindly seemed to think not natural to my heart !”

She sighed as she reflected that her obstinate rejection of his counsels must have effaced that lenient belief from his mind, and stamped her, in his opinion, as one callous to the pleadings of reason and generosity.

She now, as speedily as possible, arranged with her father for the discharge of the pecuniary part of her obligation to the Marquis ; and then sending for Nancy Meadows, she offered her a situation in her establishment, Lady Mary Graham having undertaken to procure her a superior servant, under whose direction Nancy was to be placed ; the kindness of Rosabelle’s manner surprised and delighted the poor girl, and gladly she acceded to the liberal offers of the young Countess, which would immediately rescue her from the uncertainty of her present situation.

The heart of Rosabelle rejoiced as she felt that for once she had acted as she ought to do, and repaired as far as she could the fault of which she had been guilty. She enabled Nancy to settle her mother comfortably before she left her, and softened by her recent illness and the reflections it had produced, she treated her new attendants with a kindness and gentleness she had never before practised.

To Lady Mary she felt the warmest gratitude, and blushed as she recollected her former conduct towards her, and the words of Deloraine, which now appeared to her almost prophetic !

To acknowledge her error with candor, and request Lady Mary to pardon it, was an effort still however beyond her ; her spirit was not yet sufficiently subdued ; she sought by the kindest liberality, to efface from the mind of Lady Mary any painful impressions which the conversation of Miss Osborne (as partly related to her) might have left upon it, and to express her sense of Lady Mary's kindness ; but false pride still forbade the full confession of her fault, though sorry for her errors, and awakened to their magnitude by the misery they had brought upon her ; christian humility had not yet entered her heart sufficiently to correct that haughty spirit, so long indulged, and so inconsistent with its dictates.

The health of Rosabelle still continued extremely precarious ; the attenuation of her form, her changing complexion, and eyes whose encreasing brightness, seemed to announce the symptoms of a premature decay, alarmed the Earl, and

her physicians acknowledged that, although at present they apprehended no danger in her complaints, care was necessary, and they recommended the coast of Devon for the ensuing Autumn, as most likely to re-establish her constitution.

The moment this plan was mentioned to her, she entreated, in the most persuasive manner, that Margaret Bruce might be her companion; with some little difficulty she obtained the consent of friends who were most unwilling to part from her; but Margaret, herself, impressed by the tenderest compassion for the solitary and unfriended state of one,

“ At whose birth
Nature and Fortune did contend together
To make her great,”

most readily acceded to Rosabelle's request.

Her kind heart felt that she could be not only a pleasing companion, but a useful monitor; and guided by higher views than even those of an affectionate and tender nature, she hoped she might be the instrument of good to this forsaken being, that she might lead her by degrees to the knowledge of those essential truths, which alone can purify the heart and correct the radical errors of a faulty education.

To effect this important purpose, cheerfully would Margaret Bruce have devoted herself to society far less desirable than that of Rosabelle.

The splendid gifts of fortune, with which Lady Glenross was endowed, placed within her reach the power of almost incalculable usefulness ; to be the means of extending these benefits by rational and consistent charities, and at the same time to devote the views of her young friend to the attainment of those graces which best adorn the christian character, to be, perhaps, the humble instrument by which she might be led to an eternity of happiness, were objects to attain which Margaret would joyfully have sacrificed much more than she should be called upon to do by a temporary residence with the youthful Countess.

All was speedily arranged for their journey ; and by the end of July, they were on their road towards the western coast.

At Bath they remained for two or three days, that Margaret might see that elegant city, which, though at that season nearly empty, yet in its beautiful buildings and famous springs, presented attraction enough to recompence their stay.

They made an excursion to Clifton, whither the Earl thought he might probably return for the winter, when the sea breezes became too bleak for Rosabelle.

Chapter II.

Bath, little Henry, and the Bird-organ.

HAD Rosabelle visited Bath, in the heighth of gaiety and splendor, surrounded by the giddy associates who in London had so perverted her better intentions; it is probable she would not have thought of the family she had so highly regarded some years before.

Now, however, in more serious mood, and with softened feelings, she immediately inquired for Mr. Barton's family, and learned that he had been dead for more than three years; that the two eldest daughters were married, the eldest son gone to India, the second, Charles, having been just ordained, was now acting as Curate to a Clergyman a few miles from Bath:—Mrs. Barton herself, her youngest daughter, and the little boy, who had been the first cause of Rosabelle's introduction to the family, were residing in a small house in Gay-street.

Further inquiries, led to the discovery that the widow's circumstances were far from affluent, Mr. Barton having been unfortunate in some speculations in which he had embarked before his death.

“ Nevertheless, my Lady,” said the mistress of the shop in which Rosabelle made her inquiries, “ Mrs. Barton is as much respected, as if she had been left in the great circumstances it was once supposed she would be ; nay, I may say much more, for it is well known she might have retained a much larger portion of the effects Mr. Barton left behind him for her own use, and that of her children ; but she acted with the greatest integrity, and scorned to live in affluence, while any one could say he had been injured by her husband ; so she paid every body, and left herself little more than a bare maintenance,—but, my Lady, she has her reward, in the testimony of a good conscience ; in the respect of her neighbors ; and the affection of her children, never, indeed, was such a family of love ! ”

The good woman wiped her eyes.

“ The eldest daughters, she proceeded, are tolerably well married, in point of circumstances, and what is better, have excellent husbands, who are like sons to Mrs. Barton, and do all they can to add to their mother's comforts ; it is hoped the eldest son is doing very well in India,—the second, Charles, is one of the best young men in the world, and will make an exemplary Clergyman ; his heart is devoted to his professional duties, I am sure I wish I had a good living to give him ! Then, the youngest girl, is her mother's prop and

stay, the comfort of her life; and pretty Henry, oh! he is the dearest little fellow in the world, I believe his only thought is what he can do to make his mother happy, often and often he says to me, when I call him in as he is passing to school, "I wish, Mrs. Mason, I could do any thing for mamma, but you know I am only a little boy, but I will try to learn well, and take pains with my writing and arithmetic, and then my uncle will take me into his counting house when I am old enough."

"I am sure, I beg your Ladyship's pardon for making so free and talking so much, but I never know when to stop when I begin to talk of Mrs. Barton, for I am one of the many to whom in the days of their prosperity they did so much good! Ah, madam, if you could but guess from what trouble they relieved me"

She again wiped her eyes, and Rosabelle replied, "you need not apologise to me, Mrs. Mason, for this eulogium on this virtuous family, for I also am one to whom they did, or wished to do good, not indeed by the aid of their wealth, for that I did not want, but by much good counsel, from which I wish I had profited more!"

With what pleasure did Margaret Bruce hear this simple avowal, how did she hail the growing signs of a humbled spirit to which it bore witness.

While Rosebelle yet lingered in the shop completing purchases, which she made more extensive, because she was pleased with the good sense and gratitude Mrs. Mason had

displayed ; a little boy with fair hair curling from beneath his cap, bright eyes, rosy cheeks, and a smiling intelligent countenance, put his pretty head just within the shop-door, and catching the eyes of a stranger was hastily retreating. when Mrs. Mason, having espied him, let fall the ribbon she was measuring, and cried—" There is little Henry, himself, my Lady."

" Is that little Henry ?" eagerly replied Rosabelle,—her native animation flashing from her eyes, " pray my good Mrs. Mason call him to me, how much I shall like to see him."

Mrs. Mason gladly obeyed, auguring good to her little favorite from the interest such a great lady seemed to take in him ; for Bath being now so empty, the carriages and retinue of the Earl having stopped at **an Hotel** near Mrs. Mason's, had attracted her attention, **and** she knew that the lady she was serving was the youthful Countess of Glenross, the report of whose beauty, talents, and immense fortune, had filled half the newspapers at the time of her presentation.

Smilingly, yet with bashfulness half subdued, little Henry now approached Rosabelle, whose bosom heaved with a sigh, as she remembered how nearly her impetuous temper had once led her to the destruction of this lovely boy ; " Oh why," sighed her aching heart, " did I not profit by that sad lesson, and subdue the baneful passions which have undone me ! pride, selfishness.—Yes Deloraine, even in early youth their germ was planted in my bosom—and have I, even yet, sufficiently crushed them ?"

While this thought passed rapidly through her mind, shading her expressive face with a mild character of serious reflection, the little boy led by Mrs. Mason had advanced to the seat occupied by the youthful Countess, who, stretching out her hands with pleasing smiles, invited him towards her.

“ Henry,” she said, “ you do not remember me, but I have seen you long ago, and remember you a little, little boy, and very ill and weak you were, and your good mamma nursed you till you were quite well again; and often I have held you in my arms, and taken you out to ride in my carriage:—Should you like to ride in it again, Henry?—See, that is it at the door.”

“ It’s a very pretty one,” answered the boy, gathering courage from the kindness of her looks and voice, “ and I should like to ride in it very much; but I had rather mamma had it, for I am *quite—quite* strong and able to run about, but mamma is weak and cannot walk far.”

“ Dear fellow!” said Rosabelle, stooping to kiss his rosy cheek, “ Tell me, Henry, did you ever hear your mamma speak of a noisy bird, and a naughty girl, that disturbed you, and vexed her, when you were a baby and very, very ill?”

“ I have heard mamma talk of a noisy bird called a Macaw, that disturbed me when I was ill; but she said it belonged to a good young lady, who sent it quite

away when she found it vexed me, and gave me my pretty bird-organ; and several books to my brothers and sisters."

"Amiable Mrs. Barton," said Rosabelle, looking up at Margaret, "see how she forgot all the evil I did her, and remembered only, the little good!"

"Ah, my Lady!" said Mrs. Mason, "that is indeed just like Mrs. Barton! If ever there was a true Christian upon earth, she is one!"

"There!" said Margaret, smiling kindly upon her, "there my good Mrs. Mason, you have given us the real key to her excellent character!"

Rosabelle gently raised her eyes to Margaret, and pressed her hand with a look which seemed to say, "Under your instructions I hope one day to be like her!"

Then turning to the little boy she asked him if he still had his bird-organ; "Yes," he replied, "for the good gentlemen at papa's sale said it was mine, and should not be taken from me."

"And do you know the name of the person who gave it to you?" asked Rosabelle. "To be sure I do," he answered with quickness; "it was Lady Rosabelle Mac— Mac— something." "Macalpine," said Rosabelle smiling:—"Yes, yes, that was the very name!" answered Henry, clapping his hands together as if glad to have recovered it, "It is so hard, I forget it sometimes, but

mamma never does ; and often she tells it again to me, but I cannot remember it."

" Well, I am the person who was Lady Rosabelle Macalpine, said the Countess smiling, " but I have left off that hard name, and now I am called Lady Glenross ; do you think you shall remember that Henry ? "

" I am sure I do not know," said the child, " dear, dear, such hard names, I wish they were easier ! "

Rosabelle laughed, and said, " Well then Henry to impress it better on your memory, suppose I take you in my carriage first—to some shop where you can buy pretty toys, and then home to mamma, should you like it ? "—

" Yes, I should like it," said the child with a crimson flush, " but I have no money ma'am."

" Oh, but I have," answered Rosabelle, " and your friend Mrs. Mason will tell you, you need not be afraid to go with me ;—and look here Henry !—Is not this pretty ribbon ? How many yards will you have to carry home to your sister Bella ? "—

She then bought several yards of an elegant ribbon, some gloves, and other articles such as the shop afforded, which she desired Mrs. Mason to make up into a parcel, and give to Henry to carry to his sister :—then taking the delighted child into the carriage with herself

and Margaret, she proceeded to a shop where she loaded him with books and toys; and afterwards ordered her Coachman to drive to Gay Street.

The stopping of so elegant an equipage at her door, and the entrance of strangers into her small but neat parlor, of course excited some surprize in the mind of Mrs. Barton; but they produced no confusion in her manners or deportment. Easy, placid, and self-possessed, she rose to receive her unexpected visitors; but ere she could recognize—or Rosabelle could announce herself, little Henry bustled into the room, dragging in his parcels of books and toys, and the little packet intended for his sister, to whom he instantly flew, and pushing it into her hands, exclaimed—"For you, Bella, for you, the lady gave it me for you!"

Surprized and blushing, the pretty Bella received it, looking first at the strangers, then at her mother, then whispering a few words in Henry's ear, and pausing as if wholly uncertain how she ought to conduct herself.

The delighted boy was in an instant surrounded by opened packages of books and toys, each of which he somewhat tumultuously pressed upon the notice of his mother and sister, leaving Rosabelle and Margaret still standing, and smiling at the joy his animated countenance expressed.

The perplexity which shaded the still pleasing countenance of Mrs. Barton, demanded, however gently, some

explanation of a scene so singular; and Rosabelle advancing with affectionate warmth, said, as she extended her hand, " You do not, my dear Mrs. Barton, recollect me!"

Mrs. Barton gazed doubtfully upon her, and answered, " Surely it must be—yet can it?—So grown, so formed, can it really be Lady Rosabelle Macalpine?"

Rosabelle smiled, and Henry darting forward, said—" Yes, yes mamma, that very good lady that gave me my pretty organ!—Look at it—see!—It is here!" he added, and running to the other end of the room, he withdrew a neat green baize covering, and showed, to Rosabelle the little organ she had given to him so many years before, uninjured and looking as new as if just taken from the shop.

" Dear child," she said, stooping to caress him, " how good you have been to keep it so nicely!" A tear fell on his cheek as she kissed it; she raised her head, and taking both hands of Mrs. Barton she said, " How many remembrances does the sight of that little instrument awaken in my mind! Oh how good you were to me my dear Mrs. Barton, how often have I wished that I had remained longer within reach of your useful counsels!" " Is it possible!" said Mrs. Barton softly smiling, " that in the midst of all the world could offer, your Ladyship should ever cast a single thought upon your humble friends at Bath?"

" Often, very often *lately*," said Rosabelle, with in-

genuous candor, “not perhaps while so *surrounded by all the world could offer*, when my wild spirits and my flattering associates prevented me from casting a serious thought almost on any thing!—But lately I have been ill—and—and—” unhappy she would have added, but hastily brushing away a falling tear, she said only, “and many reflections occurred which reminded me of you; and since I have been in Bath I have thought of you continually.”

They were now all seated, and Rosabelle announced to Mrs. Barton her present title, and the object of her journey into Devonshire, with many other particulars which the affectionate remembrance Mrs. Barton had always retained of her, made her listen to with interest.

While they sat conversing, little Henry clinging to the side of Rosabelle, Mr. Charles Barton came in; he had been visiting some sick persons in his parish, and his whole demeanour and appearance were those of a gentleman and a clergyman, mild, serious, and sensible. The tender smile with which his mother received him, the pleasure expressed by his sister at his having escaped several heavy showers which had fallen that morning, and the joy with which his little brother greeted him, proved how highly he was estimated in the domestic circle; and both Rosabelle and Margaret were delighted with his respectful and affectionate manners to his mother and sister.

An hour passed pleasantly in agreeable conversation,

and then Rosabelle took her leave, promising to see this amiable family again before her departure from Bath.

Anxious to benefit these excellent people, and won by the affection little Henry expressed for her, Rosabelle determined on placing him at a good school, and charging herself with the care of his future destination, and after introducing Mr. Charles Barton to her father, she earnestly intreated the Earl would exert himself, in procuring a good living for this worthy young man, which he promised to do, and some time afterwards accomplished.

On her leaving Bath she presented Miss Barton with an elegant work-box, in a drawer of which she placed a bank-note of considerable value; with a few lines to Bella, requesting her to purchase with it whatever would be most agreeable to her, well knowing that a benefit which she was too delicate to offer to Mrs. Barton, would gladly be appropriated to her use by the hands of her daughter; and determining to increase their comforts, which at present she saw were very limited, by an occasional remittance of the same kind.

This obliging present she sent from the hotel the instant before she departed; and thus avoided the thanks it would have pained her to receive. The grateful Mrs. Barton however, failed not immediately to acknowledge Lady Glenross' generous kindness by letter, and from that time a correspondence was kept up between them from which Rosabelle derived much advantage.

The travellers now proceeded through the rich and fertile county of Somerset towards their destination resting occasionally to examine any objects of curiosity which fell in their way : they saw the noble Cathedral at Wells, and the beautiful ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, surrounded as they are by a lovely country ; and some of the most luxuriant pastures in England. Thence proceeding, they passed through Taunton, a cheerful and handsome town, where they admired the fine Tower of St. Mary Magdalen's Church, and saw with pleasure many rising institutions for the benefit of the poor ; proving, that to a refinement of manners, not perhaps often found in a country town, the inhabitants of that place unite the kindest and most active benevolence.

Passing on through Exeter, after visiting every thing worth notice in that city, they finally rested at a cottage engaged for them between Ashcombe and Exmouth ; where they speedily found in the increasing strength, and amended looks of Rosabelle, that the mild sea-breezes were rapidly restoring her to health.

Their cottage, for it was no more, stood near the beautiful banks of the Exe ; and they were never tired of viewing the lovely verdure and brilliant wild flowers, which extend even to the edge of the sea, throughout most part of the western coast. They made frequent excursions from home to the neighbouring places ;—Teignmouth, Exmouth, Powderham Castle ; and many other objects of interest attracted them, and gradually restored to Rosabelle the natural vivacity of her character, but softened and chastened by the trials she had passed.

In this sweet retreat she opened her whole heart to Margaret Bruce; she told her all that had passed, acknowledged her errors candidly, and lamented their baneful effects.

Led by the mild and intelligent counsels of her early friend, all the good intentions she had lately displayed were increased and confirmed.

Margaret showed her whence the radical defects in her character arose; she taught her to look to something higher as a spring of action, than the mere impulses and feelings by which it had hitherto been governed;—making her, one day kind, liberal, and obliging, the next, harsh, selfish, and imperious, as caprice dictated, or humor swayed. She led the ductile Rosabelle gradually to study as her guide, that Holy Scripture which is given to us “For reproof, for correction, and for instruction.”—She enlightened and animated her faith, she fixed her wavering principles; in a word, she taught her to be a Christian; a character of which, though “professing and calling herself” so, Rosabelle had never till now understood the spirit.

Under this happy influence, the whole mind and manners of Rosabelle were entirely altered; she “felt her heart new opened.” The religion of Margaret Bruce, equally free from enthusiasm and formality, insisted on no needless sacrifices. She aimed not to make her pupil a harsh ascetic, or a formal dogmatist; she neither taught her to condemn those who differed from her,—to inter-

pret with intemperate zeal every remarkable event into a judgment, nor to assume that singularity of deportment and conduct which so often brings religion, in the persons of its professors, into disrepute.

She enlarged her charities, but she did not teach her to force herself upon other people, and claim the direction of theirs.

The change in Rosabelle was striking; but there was no grimace, no affectation of any kind. Her dress still elegant, and becoming her rank in life, was more simple and less studied. Rosabelle no longer threw away immense sums in useless baubles, though she never failed with judgment and discrimination to reward industry, and encourage ingenuity, as her large fortune gave her the ample means of doing; which she considered as one means of charity less oppressive, and to the full as useful as that of giving alms.

Her brow became serene, her complexion clear and healthy, her deportment placid though lively, and her voice assumed that constant sweetness which springs from a cheerful and contented heart.

She now never knew an idle or a wearisome moment, she made herself acquainted with the cottagers round her, relieved their wants, and entered with kind sympathy into their concerns; yet she never refused to mix in the society of her equals, of whom many were found in this neighborhood, (so much the resort of the

elegant and the fashionable.) She was the life of their amusements, the very spring and ornament of their innocent gaities!

Oh, how amiable did she appear in the eyes of all, how unlike the Rosabelle, deformed by passion—enslaved by selfishness and pride.

Chapter III.

Landulph Park, The Library, and Youthful Impatience.

AFTER Lord Clanallan, his daughter, and her friend had passed two months in this retreat, so useful both to the health and mind of Rosabelle; after he had rejoiced in common with all around her, in her confirmed strength and altered habits, which even led *him*—(though like Galleo, he had, hitherto, “cared for none of these things,”) to reflect seriously, and to commence a reformation in his own mind it long had much wanted: he was called to London, and not liking to leave two young females with only domestics, he consented to accept for them the invitation of a nobleman with whom he had been long acquainted, and who had a fine seat on the borders of Cornwall. The Earl and Countess of Landulph, had been at Dawlish great part of the summer for the benefit of sea-bathing for their younger children, who had lately recovered from the Meazles; and, had there

renewed their acquaintance with Lord Clanallan, and been introduced to Lady Glenross and Miss Bruce.

Desirous of cultivating an intimacy with Rosabelle, for the sake of their eldest daughter, Lady Honoria Carlesbury, who was about the same age with the young Countess, and perhaps not without a hope of fixing her in their family by a marriage with their eldest son, who was a fine young man about three-and-twenty; they pressed the Earl very earnestly not to leave the west of England without having visited Landulph Park.

He now willingly consented to place his daughter and Miss Bruce under their care for the time of his absence, which he expected would be extended to two or three weeks.

Relinquishing with regret their pretty cottage, they now proceeded, under the escort of the Earl, towards Landulph Park; they passed through Plymouth, where they employed a couple of days in examining its fine dock-yards, and the beautiful country by which it is surrounded, and arrived at Landulph Park on the fourth day after their departure from Ashcombe Cottage; there the Earl left them and proceeded to London.

At Landulph Park, the two fair friends of course found every attention that could contribute to their comfort and gratification. The house was full of occasional company, for it was the very seat of hospitality; a virtue which ornaments in its full extent the western counties of England.

An immense establishment and wealth almost unbounded, gave the Earl and Countess of Landulph, the power of living in the most elegant style imaginable.

The mornings were left entirely at the disposal of the guests, they breakfasted either in their own apartments, or in the family breakfast room, as fancy directed. After which, every one was occupied according to their own choice.

The gentlemen went out either with their fishing rods or guns, some of the party walked, some rode, some (for the season still was mild) made excursions on a beautiful river which wound near the house, some were engaged in small parties in the library or music room, and others preferred the quiet of their own apartments, those of each guest being appropriated and arranged on the most liberal scale.

At dinner, they all met in a magnificent saloon, ornamented with paintings and statuary, and opening by folding doors into a fine conservatory, and the evenings were devoted to music, dancing, or conversation parties, as choice directed.

Lord Carlesbury, the eldest son of Lord Landulph, was absent with some young companions on an excursion to the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, his return was every day expected, and two or three of his friends were to come with him.

Lady Honoria Carlesbury, the eldest daughter was a girl of moderate endowments, mild and modest, but

somewhat deficient in animation, and had scarcely ability enough to become a favorite either with Rosabelle or Margaret. The second, Lady Eudocia, was far more attractive, both in person and manners. She was not more than fifteen, but very lately emancipated from the nursery, and only admitted into company under certain limitations, not having yet been presented.

In this lively and animated girl, the youthful Countess traced much of that warmth of temper and haughtiness of spirit which had so lately characterized herself; though moderated and softened by an education less indulgent than her own had been. An attachment soon took place between them; Lady Eudocia became extremely fond of Lady Glenross, was never so happy as when with her, and to Lady Landulph's great delight, made Rosabelle not only the theme of her constant praise, but the object of her decided imitation. About a fortnight passed in this agreeable society, during which, Rosabelle had not only won the high estimation and affection of her equals, but had become an object of the warmest gratitude amongst the cottagers in the neighbourhood, to whom Lady Landulph was extremely attentive, and had formed many useful institutions for their benefit. In her charitable visits, Rosabelle and Margaret Bruce were amongst the foremost of her attendants, and their sweet conciliatory manners, the patience with which they assisted in instructing the ignorant, and the kindness with which they animated the hopes and soothed the sorrows of the sick, caused them to be looked upon as something almost more than mortal.

At the end of this fortnight, Lord Landulph announced

at dinner, that he expected his son the next day, accompanied by two or three other gentlemen. "But," added Lord Landulph, smiling, "Tom, with his usual giddiness, does not tell me who his companions are; he is like all idle people, generally in violent haste when he sits down to write."

The following day, Rosabelle and Margaret having taken their breakfast in their own apartment, went out for two or three hours with Lady Eudocia and two or three other Ladies, to walk, and visit some of Lady Landulph's pensioners. On their return, they saw two or three curricles, led horses, and grooms proceeding from the house towards the stables. "An arrival," said Miss Lindsay, one of the young visitors. "My brother is come!" cried Lady Eudocia, making a hasty step or two forward, "dear Carlesbury! he has strangers with him though," she added, checking herself, "so I must not run into his arms as I was going to do; I love him so! and yet he is the most provoking creature in the world, and delights in teasing me!" "Dear; What figures we are!" said Miss Lindsay, "I hate to meet strangers with my hair all blown about, and my frock splashed, looking like a country girl at a fair!" "You look very well," said Lady Eudocia, smiling, "your complexion, Miss Lindsay, is so brilliant from exercise, it makes amends for the disorder of your hair; however, if you really do not like to cross the hall, where, I dare say, these men are lounging about, talking to their dogs, and giving orders to their grooms; let us enter at this side door, which will take us up the private stair-case to our own apartments. I want to see Carlesbury as soon as possible, for inde-

pent of my real wish to see him again, I must get him on my side, as I know he will be, for I will not let mamma rest till she consents to my going to the Ball, which the Duke of St. Ervan gives next week almost solely on our account. On *your* account, I might say," she added, "whispering to Rosabelle." "What an affectionate resolution," said Margaret Bruce, laughing. They now separated, and as it was rather late, went to their respective toilettes.

About half an hour before dinner, Rosabelle being dressed, and wanting a book from the library, told Margaret she would fetch it and then return to her again. The library blinds had been drawn down in the morning to exclude the sun, and the lamps in that room were not yet lighted, though twilight was fast approaching. Rosabelle, however, knew exactly where the volume in question lay, but dazzled by coming through the staircase and galleries which were already lighted, she advanced cautiously into the room, and had just found the library table on which the book lay, when Lady Eudocia, who had learned from Margaret whither her fair friend was gone, ran eagerly into the room.—"Oh, here you are," she exclaimed, "how dark it is in this room, if it had not been for your white dress I could not have seen you; well, never mind that, I must speak to you!" "What is the matter, Lady Eudocia," said Rosabelle, "you seem agitated?"

"Agitated?" cried Lady Eudocia, "Oh, I cannot tell how angry I am! It is absolutely intolerable! I do not know how to bear it!" and she burst into a passionate fit of weeping.

“Compose yourself, my dear Lady Eudocia,” said Rosabelle, let us go to my dressing room. Hark!—What is that? she added, hearing a slight noise at the other end of the room. “Oh, nothing I dare say!” answered Lady Eudocia, impatiently, “the wind perhaps or one of Carlesbury’s dogs, they go all over the house; no matter what; I have no secrets to reveal, and do not care if all the house heard what I say; I am sure, every body would think me very hardly treated;” a resentful sob interrupted her words, and she hastily threw herself on a couch, covering her eyes with her hand, Rosabelle sat down by her, and taking her other hand, said, “Pray, pray, tell me what has made you so uncomfortable.” “Oh, it is too bad?” exclaimed Eudocia, struggling with her emotion. “Can you believe that mamma will not, at last, let me go to the Duke’s ball! and Carlesbury only laughed at me about it! Think how cross after having been gone so long! And then Honoria, with all her pretended mildness, and meekness, sat as silent as a statue! Oh, she does not care who goes, or who stays at home, as long as she is gratified herself! And, indeed, I believe in my heart that she has been quietly persuading mamma not to let me go, for she cannot bear the idea of my being introduced before she is married! It is not for *her* however, the Duke gives his ball.

“Oh, my dear Eudocia,” said Rosabelle, “do not let passion lead you to accuse your sister of such serious offences!—Your dear mother too, so kind, so affectionate, so devoted to her children! Can she have any motive, for denying you the gratification you seek, but an earnest wish for your real good. Oh, think yourself

happy, my dear girl, in being the object of an affection regulated by principle, an indulgence limited by reason!"

Well, I was wrong, certainly, about mamma," answered Eudocia, "she is the best of mothers; but then, think what a disappointment, how can I endure the thoughts of losing this dear ball, on which I had so set my heart!" "Is a ball really worth all this agitation," said Rosabelle, "believe me, you will soon find how inferior is the pleasure they afford to that which you anticipate! Be not so eager to enjoy a gratification so fleeting!"

"Who would think, to hear you," said Lady Eudocia, half smiling, "that you were not eighteen, and so lovely with all the goods of fortune at your feet! One would suppose you an elderly, philosophic damsel without either youth, beauty, or wealth!" "Suppose me rather" said Rosabelle mildly, "what I really am, one, who by too eagerly grasping it, has crushed the butterfly, pleasure, while its wings were but half expanded! And let my experience teach you my dear Lady Eudocia, that by indulging this impetuosity of temper, you will prepare for yourself more wretchedness than you perhaps think possible."

"I dare say you are right," said the candid Eudocia, "but I cannot imagine, how *you* of all people, can tell what impetuosity of temper may produce, for never was any one so uniformly mild and gentle as you are! In all the hours I have passed with you, I have never seen you out of humor for a moment, not even with that

provoking Miss Maitland, who will sing duets with you though totally ignorant of time, and with an ear that always makes her sing half a note too sharp; nor with Miss Lindsay, who runs up to you ten times in a day to ask how she looks, and whether her hair is well arranged! nor with half a hundred such as our present visitors, every one more tiresome than another, as the French fairy tales say. Then you are so desirous of gratifying every body rather than yourself; hear only what your servants say of your consideration for their comfort!"

"Alas, Eudocia!" said Rosabelle, sighing, "if you knew what an offender I have been, you would not, by your praises, hazard the overthrow of those better qualities I am laboring to establish in the place of too long indulged pride, selfishness! and passion! If you knew the struggle it often costs me even yet to subdue them!" "But how is it possible you always succeed so admirably?" asked Eudocia. "Margaret Bruce, shall tell you," answered Rosabelle, "whence, whatever I am able to accomplish, is derived, she first taught me, to seek in religion, a correction for the glaring deformities of my character; you, my dear Eudocia, always under the guidance of an enlightened mother, have not that lesson now to learn! Certainly there is some one in the room;" she added, in a lower tone, "I am sure I heard a sigh from yonder recess."

"You are very fanciful," said Eudocia, laughing, "but let us go to my dressing-room, then you shall leave me to fret alone, for I have been crying, so I shall

not go down to dinner to be stared at by strangers, and laughed at by Carlesbury, teasing me about my red eyes, and treating me like a punished child."

"I will dine with you," said Rosabelle; "I am really tired with my walk, and Lady Landulph will, I doubt, not, send us a chicken, which we will eat together."

"Dear, dear Lady Glenross," said the ardent Eudocia, "how good you are, one hour of your conversation will reconcile me more to my disappointment than any thing else would do." They then departed together.

Chapter IV.

A Reasonable Lover, Stability, and Conclusion.

LITTLE did Rosabelle imagine from whence the sigh, she had undoubtedly heard, proceeded.—Who had been the concealed auditor of her conversation with Lady Eudocia! It was the Marquis of Deloraine.

He had met with Lord Carlesbury on his northern tour, with two or three others of their mutual friends, by whom he had been induced to join the party, and to proceed with them into Cornwall.

For the last three weeks they had never been three days stationary, which had prevented Lord Carlesbury from knowing who were the present visitors at Landulph Park.

They had arrived while the ladies were walking, and Deloraine having finished his toilette had been shown by Lord Carlesbury into the library, where he said he would amuse himself with a book till dinner time, while Carlesbury had half an hour's conversation with his mother and sisters, to whom the Marquis was nearly a stranger. Fatigued with his journey however, and the heat which in the middle of the day was still very great, and lulled by the gradually increasing darkness, he had fallen asleep on the sofa, till he was awakened by the entrance of Rosabelle, the gloominess of the room prevented him from seeing more than that it was a lady, and as she seemed to be looking for a book, he concluded she would leave the room the next minute, and wishing to avoid the awkwardness of discovering himself to a stranger, he remained quiet.

In another moment, Lady Eudocia hastily entered the apartment, and Deloraine half rose from the sofa, intending to move away lest he should hear something not intended for the general ear, when a voice he believed familiar to his senses, arrested his steps and agitated his heart with a sensation which alike impeded utterance and motion. Yet, was it really the voice of Rosabelle? Surely he could not mistake those well-known tones, though they appeared still more soft and harmonious, than even in her happiest hours he had ever known them.

Still more was he disposed to believe he must be mistaken, when his emotion abated sufficiently to allow

of his hearing the sentiments she uttered. Could it be Rosabelle, who thus gently warned her companion against the indulgence of an impetuous temper! Could it be Rosabelle, to whom praise apparently so heartfelt was addressed on her own meek and amiable disposition! While thus he paused in agitated thought, every minute added to the unpleasantness of his situation.

To discover himself now to two persons, one of them a perfect stranger, and the other, if indeed it were Rosabelle, who had been, nay, who still was so deeply interesting to him, would be productive of the most untoward feelings in all parties, and the strange lady had declared that she had no secrets to impart. Still then, he lingered; still, every word from Rosabelle more and more surprised and charmed him: agitated, absorbed, he scarcely recollected that in propriety he ought to remove from the hearing of their discourse; though the deep sigh he breathed, as Rosabelle mournfully repeated the words he had used in their last interview, and confessed that pride and selfishness were indeed, at that time, the inmates of her mind, warned them that some one was certainly a witness of their conversation, and they almost immediately left the apartment.

Lord Carlesbury entered the next moment, and laughingly asked his friend if he were asleep, exclaiming against the servants for not having lighted the lamps. He called one who was passing to bring lights, "Do light these lamps my good fellow," he said, "why we cannot see our way across the room, we shall cer-

tainly break our legs against some of the tables. "My Lord will not suffer any body to touch the lamps in that room, because of the shades and vases my Lord," said the man, "except Vilcour, and he has been busy in assisting to arrange the ball-room." "Oh, I know, I know," said the gay Carlesbury, "my father trembles if any one goes near the lamps and vases in this room, except steady Old Vilcour, who, if he should chance to break one of them, would, I believe, throw himself on his sword, as Vatel did, because the fish did not arrive in time.*

The ball-room! Oh, then, we are to have dancing to-night I suppose; but if you are as tired as I am Deloraine, we shall not add much to their gaiety. "Why, what on earth is the matter with you," added his lordship, looking in Deloraine's face, as he led him across the hall towards the dining Saloon; "why my good friend, you look as if you had seen a spectre, and do you know who we have in the house? No less a personage than the youthful Countess of Glenross, rich, beautiful,—oh, I know not what, but perhaps, Deloraine, you know her!" "A little; that is, I was rather somewhat intimate with her father, Lord Clanallan," answered Deloraine, coloring and confused, but as they now entered the Saloon, Carlesbury did not remark his hesitation.

Here the Marquis was presented in form to Lady

* Superintendant of the household of Louis ———, who actually destroyed himself, because disappointed of some fish for his royal master's dinner.

Landulph, Lady Honoria, and a few others of the party, Lord Landulph, he had seen before. The eyes of Deloraine, who was seated at table next to Lady Honoria, wandered in search of Rosabelle, but a moment's recollection convinced him that she had persevered in her kind plan of dining with Lady Endocia, for whom Lord Carlesbury presently inquired, asking if she did not dine with them. "Generally," his mother said, "but she is a little disconcerted to-day, and Lady Glenross is so kind as to dine with her in her own apartment." "Oh, poor Eudocia," said Lord Carlesbury, laughing, "I suppose she has been crying till she is not fit to be seen, come, ma'am, come, you must really let her go to this ball of the Duke's; I must give her all my influence though I did tease the poor child, to-day! A ball at fifteen! Think how delightful! Don't you wish, Honoria, you could go back to that charming period; when all is new and fresh, when the heart beats and the lights and decorations swim before the eyes on entering the ornamental ball room, and the chalk flowers on the floor seem to us blossoms strewn by the hand of Felicity herself!"

"What a rhapsody!" said Lady Landulph, laughing, "Carlesbury is become quite poetical since he visited the lakes, however, Honoria is hardly far enough beyond the period you speak of to feel the difference very acutely." "Well, well," rejoined Carlesbury, "but you will let Eudocia go ma'am?" "Yes," said Lady Landulph, "that charming creature, the young Countess of Glenross, has already been pleading for Eudocia, and I know not who can resist her entreaties." Instantly every one fell into almost

rapturous praises of Rosabelle, and though her beauty, her grace, and talents, were mentioned with high admiration, yet, every one seemed to dwell delightedly on her sweetness of temper, humility, and the kindness with which she uniformly treated all about her; Lord Deloraine listened with astonishment and joy, yet, he mingled with his feelings of rejoicing, a deep regret that he had so easily resigned a woman capable of thus reforming the errors of her character, and of reproach to himself for not having endeavored, with greater patience, to lead her from the follies by which they had been separated.

A thousand thoughts rolled impetuously through his mind, he recollected the various passages of their short, but interesting intimacy, and the hopes, once so tenderly cherished, but now, as he believed, lost to him for ever! A slight question recalled him from his reverie, he looked up and saw the eyes of Miss Bruce fixed upon him, he colored, and exchanged a glance with her, which showed that they were mutually interesting to each other, far beyond what the slight and recent introduction which had taken place between them would have warranted.

Lord Deloraine who had often heard Rosabelle mention Margaret Bruce, and had immediately recalled the name when he heard her repeat it in the library; now, with mixed respect and kindness of manner, addressed himself to Miss Bruce, he spoke to her of having been lately in Scotland, spoke with pleasure of the hospitality and kindness he had there experienced and paid her such other attentions as the distance at which they sat from each other admitted of.

In the evening, Rosabelle and Lady Eudocia joined the party in the Ball-room, the latter, once more in the highest spirits ; having obtained permission from her mother to be one of the party at the Duke of St. Ervan's, accompanied, however, by a gentle lecture on the 'impatience of temper' she had discovered in the morning, to which she replied, that Lady Glenross had already convinced her of the impropriety of her conduct, and she hoped never to fall into a similar error.

" Take Lady Glenross for your model," said Lady Landulph, " and you cannot fail of being all I wish you."

Rosabelle had heard from Margaret Bruce, that the Marquis of Deloraine was one of the newly arrived party, and it may be imagined that she could not join the family circle without considerable emotion ; she knew not whether after her contemptuous rejection of his letter, the Marquis would even consider himself as entitled to address her as an acquaintance.

To meet him as a stranger, to see him presented to her as a person she had never met before, would be a trial to which she feared she was hardly equal.

Endeavoring, however, to compose her mind by reflecting that her present mortification had been produced by her own folly, and that therefore she ought to take her punishment patiently, she entered the ball-room leaning on the arm of Margaret, and surrounded by two or three young people who were never so happy as when they were with her. Her trembling frame, changing color, and down-

cast eyes, would easily have discovered to any accurate observer, that her heart was deeply agitated.

The Marquis, who had been impatiently watching the door, now heard a murmur near him ;—" She comes, La bella Rosabella the young Countess, more beautiful than ever ! What a complexion,—look at that bright hair waving on her forehead,—what a lovely creature !—But what makes her look even unusually timid to-night, she is always the pattern of unaffected modesty ; but now she really seems agitated, and the soft composure of her mien appears disturbed by some slight emotion."

Such were the whispered comments which met the ear of Deloraine as Rosabelle advanced, he eagerly pressed forward to obtain a view of her, and hardly could he believe it was indeed Rosabelle who stood before him. She was somewhat taller, and her person more formed than when he had seen her last, she was, he thought, if possible, more beautiful than ever ; not only her features and complexion were perfect, but her countenance now displayed the expression of every virtue. No longer pride hovered on her polished brow or contempt curled her lip, her eyes no longer lightened with disdainful glances, but tranquil, serene, gentle, yet animated ; every look declared the improvement of her mind, every gesture the perfection of manners, whose graces sprang from a well regulated mind. Her dress though elegant and fashionable, no longer displayed unbounded expense or whimsical extravagance ; it seemed fashioned by the hands

of taste and modesty, and to combine all that was graceful, refined, and delicate.

Rosabelle's apprehensions were in some measure dispelled, though her tremors were not lessened by the Marquis's immediately crossing the room, and addressing her in a tone and manner full of respect and interest. He forbore to oppress her by any particularity of manner, but contented himself with asking her in general terms for her father, and some other customary questions, while from the gentleness of her demeanor, and the softness of her accents, he was led to believe that resentment against himself no longer found a harbor in her bosom.

When the dancing commenced, he led Lady Eudocia to the set, contriving to make her talk as much as possible of Lady Glenross, whom, indeed, she never seemed weary of praising, and of whom she told him some interesting and affecting anecdotes, descriptive of her goodness and amiable qualities.

The party broke up rather earlier than common, as the gentlemen who had arrived in the morning were fatigued, and both Deloraine and Rosabelle retired, revolving in their minds the past, and looking forward with renewed interest to the future.

The next day, Deloraine met by accident in the gallery, Nancy Meadows, whom he soon recognised as the poor lace-maker, who had suffered so severely from the caprice of Rosabelle.

As she courtesied with deep respect, and a glow of gratitude on her cheek, he stopped and asked her a few questions, inquired how she came to be in Cornwall, and if her mother was quite recovered.

With surprise he learned that she was now in the suite of Lady Glenross, and, encouraged by the good-natured manner in which Deloraine spoke to her, she gladly availed herself of the opportunity, to speak in the highest terms of her lady.

With tears of gratitude, she told what liberal amends the young Countess had made to herself and her mother for the anxiety her momentary caprice had made them suffer, she rapidly commented on the uniform sweetness and considerate kindness with which Rosabelle now treated her domestics, and spoke of her as being in every respect, the best and most conciliating mistress in the world.

Deloraine heard all this with surprise and pleasure, but he knew how much her servants had formerly appeared to be attached to Lady Glenross, even at the time when in her absence they spoke so decidedly of the violence of her temper.

He knew too, how much praise may be purchased by acts of munificence ; and how a youthful dependent, like Nancy, may be swayed by profuse gifts to overlook those errors of conduct and character which had been the means of separating him from Rosabelle.

He had suffered before too severely by the precipitance

with which he had yielded his heart to her charms and the general praises which her beauty, station, and talents, had demanded, not to be cautious now, not thoroughly to investigate the reality of that change, which seemed to have been effected in her sentiments and conduct.

To this end, he carefully avoided all particularity of manner when they met, and endeavored to observe with patience, the increasing attention of Lord Carlesbury, and the Duke of St. Ervan.

It had been Deloraine's intention not to remain more than a week at Landulph Park, but he now readily complied with the urgent invitations of his noble hosts to make a longer visit, as a residence under the same roof with Rosabelle gave him an opportunity of studying her character, under its new appearance.

Every inquiry, every observation, confirmed the reality of the change which had taken place in her mind and in her heart; the poor spoke of her not only as a liberal benefactress, but as a mild, patient, and consistent adviser and comforter, of those whom sickness or sorrow, or even a conscious sense of sin had oppressed and brought low. Her equals were never weary of praising her gentleness, her sweetness, and the kindness with which, regardless of self-gratification, she promoted their innocent pleasures. If now and then a lurking taint of envy or jealousy would have depreciated her virtues, the source from which the attempt sprung, was too obvious to deceive. Deloraine's own observation, convinced him that her conduct was every

thing that the praises of her friends described. He saw her receiving with modesty the affectionate attentions of her young companions, not as if they were her due, but grateful for them as the gift of kindness, and repressing with mild dignity, the assiduities of those gentlemen, who wanted but the slightest encouragement, to become candidates for her favor.

Not a word, not a look, betrayed the smallest taint of levity, vanity, or an undue appreciation of her own importance.

To Deloraine, Rosabelle conducted herself with a propriety which the peculiarity of their situation rendered not very easy of attainment. She treated him as a friend whom she esteemed, and whose good opinion she was desirous of obtaining; but she carefully avoided placing herself in situations which must attract his attention or demand his assiduities. By a sort of tacit compact they seemed—though always obliging and respectful to each other, to avoid an increasing intimacy which might have excited observation; still the eyes of each were upon the other,—still their hearts were silently united,—though, to a cursory observer, they would have seemed to be the two of the whole party who were the most indifferent to each other.

The Marquis sedulously cultivated an acquaintance with Margaret Bruce, and from her he first heard of Rosabelle's severe illness, and the consequent desertion of her pretended friends; and scarcely could he control the in-

dignation of his generous nature when Harriet Osborne's conduct was revealed to him; though Margaret's mild, and forgiving spirit, prevented her from painting it in those black colors it so well deserved.

When Deloraine had been rather more than a week at Landulph Park, some of the visitors he found there departed, and their place was supplied by the arrival of Sir William, and Lady Neville, and Miss Neville, their only daughter; this young lady who had been early introduced into the circles of fashion, had a considerable share of self confidence, and a certain portion of that levity and heartlessness which had distinguished the former companions of Rosabelle; but which had now become so distasteful to her that she wondered how she had ever endured it in Harriet Osborne and the Lady Dewnils; in whose society she recollected once or twice to have seen Miss Neville, though she never till now had been introduced to her.

One evening it happened, that Rosabelle, Margaret, Lady Eudocia, the Marqu's, and Lord Carlesbury, were seated a little apart from the rest of the party in the library,—they were employed in looking over some fine prints and drawings, pausing at intervals to remark on the different designs, and falling into agreeable conversations, full of taste, information, and easy gaiety;—the pleasantness of this sociable little group was doubtless enhanced both to Deloraine and Rosabelle, by their proximity to each other, for though they did not talk much together, there were accidental looks and words which

spoke much to themselves, though they said nothing particular to the ear of others.

The enjoyment of this happy party was now invaded by Miss Neville, who after carelessly turning over three or four of the prints, threw herself into a seat opposite to Rosabelle; and rather staring, than looking in her face, said—"I had a letter yesterday Lady Glenross, from your old friend, Miss Osborne."

"Had you," said Rosabelle, somewhat coolly, but coloring a little, "I hope she was well." "Oh, very well," answered Miss Neville; "and very gay, she is gone to Paris with the bride."

"The bride," repeated Rosabelle, "who do you mean?"

"Lady Jane Dewnil, now Lady Roseburn;—Lady Ann and Miss Osborne, were bridesmaids:—Did not you know Lady Jane was married, Lady Glenross?"

"Yes, I recollect now to have heard it," answered Rosabelle. "But I thought you were all extremely intimate," persisted Miss Neville. "We were intimate certainly for a time," said Rosabelle.

"Who are you talking of?" said Lord Carlesbury, "Not surely, Harriet Osborne, Colonel Osborne's daughter?"

"The very same," answered Miss Neville; "and why

not, my Lord?" "Because nothing but Lady Glenross's own authority should induce me to believe she ever was intimate with that giddy, heartless, affected girl. "Oh, Lady Glenross is altered since that," said Miss Neville with a sneer, and casting a glance at Margaret Bruce, "she has been *converted* since last year!" "Converted!" exclaimed Lord Carlesbury, "what do you mean?" "Lord, I am sure I do not mean any harm," said Miss Neville, "but we were all told she had turned Methodist, or something of that sort, and had left off quizzing and all sorts of gaities."

Carlesbury laughed contemptuously, and Lady Eudocia eagerly exclaimed, "Lady Glenross is neither a Methodist now, nor was she—I will venture to say, ever one of Harriet Osborne's quizzing set; I have heard enough of Miss Osborne and the Lady Dewnils, though I never saw them."

"Do not venture too much, my dear Lady Eudocia," said Rosabelle gently, yet blushing and looking down, "I am ashamed to say, that I was indeed, most degradingly distinguished as a leader in that set you so much, and so properly disapprove!"

"Oh I know it," said Miss Neville,—“I have heard the whole story of the fine quiz you played off on Lady Mary Graham,—the Ottoman,—the Pas de Deux, and every thing. I am sure I thought Harriet would have made me die with laughing when she told me of it.”

“ If she told the story rightly,” said Deloraine, no longer able to restrain his indignation, “ I hope she did not omit her own share;—I hope she told the flattering arts by which she misled and perverted for the time, a heart whose natural impulses were all good and generous?—I hope she told, how she deserted the friend she had affected to love and admire, in the moment of sickness and danger:—I hope she told, that she villified and abused that generous and confiding friend, when the gates of death seemed opening to inclose her.”

Rosabelle cast a look of grateful thanks on Deloraine, while the tears trembled in her eyes, and her cheeks were colored with an animated blush.

“ Oh, we all know the deep interest your Lordship takes in the subject,” said Miss Neville with a sneer.

“ I have not indeed, yet so disciplined my own heart,” said Deloraine, looking with tender admiration on Rosabelle, “ as to endure, with that patience which Lady Glenross so happily displays, the mention to her of Harriet Osborne; which all who know what really passed between them, she must consider as an insult.”

“ I may well endure that, and much more with patience, Lord Deloraine,” said Rosabelle, in a saddened but placid tone, “ for greatly have I deserved a heavier punishment for follies, which indeed, almost amounted to crimes, though I trust they had no criminal intention:—Lady Mary Graham has given me the most noble

proofs of her forgiveness of the injuries I did her, and I trust I am not of a spirit so much more evil, that I cannot forgive in my turn.—I bear not the slightest resentment against Miss Osborne, but on the contrary, shall always be glad to hear of the welfare of one whom I once called my friend.”

She then rose from her seat, and calmly courtesying to Miss Neville, wished her a good night; and taking a kinder leave of the friends around her, put her arm within Margaret’s and retired to her own apartment, leaving them all in admiration of her patient forbearance, the value of which Lord Deloraine did not fail to explain to Lord Carlesbury and his sister.

Hardly could he restrain himself from immediately declaring the tender interest he still retained in all that concerned her; but Rosabelle still so carefully, though gently, avoided any particular conversation with him, that in a house so crowded he could find no opportunity, even if he had not still felt a reasonable wish to be sure of her stability, after she should have encountered the temptations of a gayer scene, and be removed from the counsels and influence of Margaret Bruce.

On the return of Lord Clanallan, his joy was great, to find the Marquis in the same circle with his daughter. Nothing was nearer to his heart than the wish of reuniting two beings, who seemed in birth, person, years, and talents, to be formed for each other.

He talked to Rosabelle the first moment he could meet with her alone, and although he quickly perceived that her heart still retained the affection she had, by his permission, encouraged for the Marquis, he could not learn that Deloraine had discovered any wish to renew the connection which had been so suddenly dissolved.

Rosabelle intreated that the Earl would take no steps indicative of his anxiety for a reconciliation between them, the first motions towards which, ought certainly to come from the Marquis.

With some reluctance Lord Clanallan consented to oblige her; but his return, and the anxiety he could not help betraying to promote a more familiar intercourse between the Marquis and his daughter, rendered the situation of both more painful than ever. Rosabelle could not bear to be forced upon his notice, and Deloraine almost believed that the decision with which she avoided him could only be the result of dislike.

In the course of the week Lord Carlesbury made his proposals in form, and was immediately—though with gentleness, rejected. It was also fully understood, that the Duke of St. Ervan had offered his coronet to the acceptance of Lady Glenross, but without success.

Lord Clanallan, more than half offended at the continued distance and reserve of the Marquis, now determined on removing his daughter from Landulph Park; they accordingly departed a few days after the final rejection

of Lord Carlesbury ; Rosabelle, notwithstanding that circumstance, carrying with her the love and admiration of all the family. The Earl, his daughter, and Margaret Bruce, spent the months of November and December at Clifton ; Lord Clanallan being anxious to see Rosabelle's health perfectly established before she encountered the trial of a London winter.

In January they took up their abode, once more, in Park Lane ; and a fortnight afterwards the lover of Margaret Bruce returned to England : soon after which they were united, the marriage taking place from the house of the Earl, who acted as nuptial father, and Lady Glenross, and Lady Mary Graham, as bridesmaids.

The bride and bride-groom then returned into Scotland, carrying with them liberal marks of the affection and gratitude of Lord Clanallan and the young Countess.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick now, at Rosabelle's desire, resumed her station in Park Lane ; and the Earl, at Rosabelle's request, presented to Lady Mary Graham so noble a proof of their grateful remembrance of her conduct, as fixed her in a comfortable independence for life, while the recollection of the past, secured her from ever again falling into those follies, which had at one time exposed her to derision and contempt.

Soon after Lady Glenross's return to London, the Marquis of Deloraine again became visible in the circles of

fashion. From the ordeal of a winter in London, Rosabelle came out, pure and unimpeached, though mixing occasionally in those large parties of which she was ever considered the brightest ornament; she placed her principal delight in a smaller and more select circle, which her virtue and talents made it easy for her to draw about her. For her own immediate intimates, she chose those who were highly estimated both for their goodness and accomplishments; and in a society to which it was soon considered an honor to be admitted, she passed most of her evenings, withdrawn, though without affectation, from the frivolity and dissipation in which she had passed the first few months after her presentation.

Deloraine, ere many weeks had elapsed, felt ashamed of the distrust to which he had yielded, and accused himself of a narrowness and suspicion unworthy both of Rosabelle and his own character. Now fully satisfied with her whole conduct, he requested an interview with Lord Clanallan; and freely confiding to him what had been the motives of his apparent reserve, he found but little difficulty in prevailing on the Earl to present him once more to his daughter, as a candidate for her regard.

A short time sufficed to place Rosabelle and Deloraine again on terms of confidence and friendship. She candidly acknowledged her sense of the errors into which she had fallen, and explained the steps which had led to her present sentiments and conduct. She so entirely

opened her heart and principles to his view, that he could no longer feel the slightest doubt of her stability, guarded as she was by that humility of feeling, that Christian conviction of her own insufficiency, which can alone insure a continuance in virtue.

Deloraine's proposals were generously, and without affectation accepted, and in a few months she became his wife.

Combining those elegancies of life which their high station demanded, with a certain sobriety of feeling which is the very opposite of that wild eagerness for pleasure and dissipation too generally practised, the Marquis and Marchioness of Deloraine presented a pattern of excellence to all around them.

Their extensive bounties to the poor, their liberal demeanor to their equals;—the gentleness with which they treated those who differed from them in opinion and practise,—the kindness with which they won the hearts of many, and taught them to emulate the goodness they admired—their conduct as patrons, friends, and parents; proved the excellence of those principles by which their lives were governed.

They clearly exemplified the truth, that Religion commands no rigorous or useless sacrifices, no ascetic renunciations, but that “using the world without abusing it,” the gifts of heaven, although they come in the tempt-

ing form of wealth or station, may be so applied as to become a blessing instead of a snare ; and so enjoyed, as to be perfectly compatible with a life of virtue, and promote, rather than endanger, the highest views of a Christian.

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